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# THE GREAT DESIGN OF HENRY IV

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# THE GREAT DESIGN OF HENRY IV

FROM THE MEMOIRS OF THE  
DUKE OF SULLY

AND

# THE UNITED STATES OF EUROPE

BY EDWARD EVERETT HALE

WITH INTRODUCTION

BY

EDWIN D. MEAD



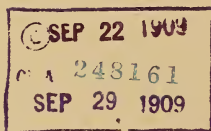
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TO THE MEMORY OF  
EDWARD EVERETT HALE  
THIS EDITION OF  
"THE GREAT DESIGN OF HENRY IV"  
WHICH HE MOST CONSPICUOUSLY  
AND EARNESTLY COMMENDED  
TO THE ATTENTION  
OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE  
IS DEDICATED





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## INTRODUCTION

The "Great Design" of Henry IV of France was the first practical plan of a comprehensive character in modern history for the federation of Europe. Europe in 1600 was the civilized world; and this was the great inaugural vision in a series of visions, which, thus beginning, rapidly grew, of an organized and peaceful world. Dante in his *Monarchia* had made his fervent plea for a revived and idealized Roman Empire, as the ground and guarantee of European unity; but the three centuries between Dante and Henry of Navarre had made it plain that the reconstruction of the Roman Empire would never come, and that the unity of which the great poet-patriot dreamed could only come through the federation of independent states.

A forgotten and almost unknown plan for organizing the European powers for the sake of peace deserves here at least passing notice; for it antedated by almost a century the design of the great French king, and by much more than a century the publication of his design. We get the knowledge of it from Erasmus, who was the greatest apostle of peace in his time.<sup>1</sup> There is an old letter from Erasmus to a friend, written probably about 1517, or having reference to that period, alluding to an effort at that time in behalf of the peace of Europe, which is so

<sup>1</sup> For more complete notice of this significant historical incident, see article by the present writer on "An Early Scheme to organize the World," in the *Independent*, August 29, 1907.

comprehensive and definite in its character that it may almost be considered a "Great Design" previous to the famous scheme of Henry IV. Erasmus says in this letter :

It was a favorite project about that time to assemble a Congress of kings at Cambray. It was to consist of Maximilian the Emperor, Francis the First, King of France, Henry the Eighth of England, and Charles, the sovereign of the Low Countries, of which I am a native. They were to enter, in the most solemn manner, into mutual and indissoluble engagements to preserve peace with each other, and consequently peace throughout Europe. This momentous business was very much promoted by a man of most excellent character, William of Ciervia; and by one who seemed to have been born to advance the happiness of his country and of human nature, John Sylvagius, chancellor of Burgundy. But certain persons who get nothing by peace and a great deal by war threw obstacles in the way, which prevented this truly kingly purpose from being carried into execution. After this great disappointment I sat down and wrote, by desire of John Sylvagius, my *Querela Pacis*.

The *Complaint of Peace*, although the most important essay by Erasmus in behalf of international justice and peace, was not his only nor his first impeachment of the war system. He discussed the same subject in his panegyric to Philip, Duke of Burgundy, at Brussels, in 1504, and repeatedly afterwards. It is a thing to be remembered that it was from the same land in which, at The Hague, the Parliament of Man was in our own time to hold its first memorable sessions for the definite inauguration of the organization of the world, that the first conspicuous and well-considered plea came for the supplanting of the war system of nations by the methods of reason.

The world's great plans for order and peace have been born often of the severe experience of disorder and war and the burden of the loss and cost of war. Dante's

*Monarchia* was prompted by the anarchy rife everywhere in Italy in the thirteenth century. The time of Erasmus was the time when the great centralized monarchies were rising upon the ruins of the feudal states, and the standing army, a thing then new in history, was making its appearance as a regular institution. Grotius's *Rights of War and Peace* was published in the midst of the Thirty Years' War. "The continued danger which lies in the heaping up of war material transforms the armed peace of our time into a crushing burden which peoples find it harder and harder to bear," — to avert "the calamities which threaten the whole world" from this was the necessity which drove the Czar of Russia to call the first Peace Conference at The Hague. The very name of Henry of Navarre suggests the long civil conflict between the Catholics and the Huguenots in France; and the chapters of the history of Spain, Austria, the Netherlands, and England which were coincident with his stormy career were chapters no less tragical, and often yet more tragical, than those of the history of France. If ever there was a time to prompt rulers and statesmen to great designs for checking the war system, it was this time.

Henry was born in 1553, the year that Mary Stuart became queen of England, three years before Charles V abdicated in favor of Philip II, and when William the Silent was just entering public life. He succeeded to the throne of France in 1589, the year after the destruction of the Invincible Armada, and five years after the assassination of William of Orange; he fought the battle of Ivry in 1590, and promulgated the Edict of Nantes in 1598. His illustrious reign — for greatest of all the kings of France Henry surely was — and his life were ended by

the hand of the assassin in 1610, seven years after the death of Queen Elizabeth. Such is the barest chronology of the life of the author of the "Great Design"; but it is sufficient to recall to the reader with knowledge and imagination the character of the period in which he worked and thought.

Henry's great minister was the Duke of Sully. Sully played a part in the reign of the French king hardly inferior to that played in the reign of Elizabeth — who, if we may believe Sully, is to be looked on as joint author with Henry of the "Great Design" itself — by Cecil, Lord Burleigh. Unlike Burleigh, he wrote voluminous memoirs; and it is in these *Memoirs of Sully* that we are given the account of the "Great Design." The *Memoirs* cover the whole reign, and indeed almost the whole life, of the great king. Henry was on his way to visit Sully when he was assassinated. Sully lived until 1641. He began to dictate his *Memoirs* to his secretaries shortly after Henry's death, these *Memoirs* being based largely upon journals and notes which he had been preparing for many years. Only the first two volumes, covering the years 1570 to 1605, were completed in his lifetime, being printed in 1634. The unfinished portion was transcribed by his secretaries, and the third and fourth volumes were published at Paris in 1662, more than twenty years after Sully's death. It is at the end of the last volume that the special chapter devoted to the "Great Design" appears, although many references to it are scattered through preceding pages, and the two long passages reprinted in the present volume after the "Great Design" itself are of special significance.

The authenticity of the "Great Design" as the work of Henry himself has been the subject of long and heated

controversy, a controversy that still goes on. Many have charged Sully not only with casting the "Great Design" in the shape in which we have it, but with its sheer fabrication, for some purpose of his own. To me no adequate motive for this appears; and the respective qualities of the minds of Henry and Sully make the conception of the scheme the more natural for Henry, while the considerable elaboration of it in some respects by Sully — who, in the interview with James I, which he reports, professed to have a leading part in developing it — as he came to put it into literary form seems not unlikely. The settlement of this vexed question does not concern us here. Whether Shakespeare or Bacon wrote *Hamlet*, our chief interest is in the possession of *Hamlet*. Whether the king or his minister conceived the "Great Design," our chief interest is in the fact that this broad and bold programme of world organization was worked out in that critical period of history. The controversy, however, has been so notable and began so early that I incorporate here, as of probable interest to many, the note relating to the matter appended by the Abbé de l'Écluse to the chapter upon the "Great Design" in his edition of Sully's *Memoirs*, published in 1747:

The *Memoirs* of Sully are the only monument which has preserved to posterity an account of the great design of Henry IV. We find no traces of it in any of the historians, authors of memoirs, or other writers, who were contemporary with that prince; their silence in this matter proceeded, no doubt, from their not knowing enough of it to say anything with certainty about it. The world did not begin to descant upon it till the "*Memoirs of Sully*," wherein it is so clearly described, were published; and among all those who have considered it ever since about the middle of the seventeenth century, I find scarcely any who have questioned the possibility of executing it:



doubtless, because they lived near enough to the times in which it was formed to be convinced, even from the mouths of those who had been witnesses of the preparations and dispositions which were made, that all the measures had been taken precisely in the same manner as related by the Duke of Sully; and consequently, that it would have had but few of those obstacles to encounter which have since been raised against it. The author of a manuscript discourse in the King's Library, which to me appears to be the most ancient memoir we have of that time, seems not in the least to have doubted of success in its execution. And M. de Pèrefixe, who, in the third part of his history of Henry the Great, has given a short but very accurate account of the scheme, says positively that it would have succeeded; and further confirms his assertion by proofs, which he gives (p. 388 and following). The continuator of Thuanus, in what little he has said of it (anno 1609-10), does not appear to have been of a different sentiment. The Marshal de Bassompierre also, in his Journal (tom. i.), seems to be in its favour. To these authorities we may also join that of the author of the Life of the Duke of Epemon, and some others, who all seem to be of the same opinion. Indeed, until the beginning of the present century, all authors appear to have been unanimous on this point; and several of our modern historians have joined them herein. Vittorio Siri (Mem. Recond. tom. i. pp. 29, 514; tom. ii. p. 45, &c.) is the first that I know of by whom this great enterprise has been treated as absurd and impossible; but the ignorance which he shows in the whole affair, even in those points which are the least contested, his attachment to the Spanish politics, and his distance from the persons of Henry IV. and his minister, which is every way apparent in all he says on the subject, render him, in this respect, very justly exceptionable; his sentiments have been adopted by the author of the History of the Mother and Son (tom. i. p. 44), and for a similar reason of attachment to the queen, mother of Louis XIII. But this writer, such as he is, producing no better authority for his opinion than the age of Henry IV., who was then near sixty, appears also to have been so entirely unacquainted with the affair, that we may, without scruple, pronounce he was ignorant of the disposition which had been made for the complete execution of it within the space of three years, and that he condemns the design without understanding it. I have much



greater reverence for the authority of some modern politicians, who consider it as a kind of impossibility thus to change the face of all Europe in the manner proposed by Henry IV., and who imagine that in our days a much more happy expedient has been discovered whereby to obtain the equilibrium of Europe, than by reviving the ancient council of the Amphyctions; what I mean is the precaution now observed of having all the principal powers of Europe accede to, and become the guarantees of, every particular treaty. But all those calamities which we have suffered in consequence of war do but too plainly evince its insufficiency. In regard to the main stress of the question, I agree with them that Europe could not now, but with great difficulty, be constituted in the manner proposed by Henry the Great; nevertheless I believe, without pretending to subject any one to my opinion, that those who treat this prince's design as a chimera do not pay all the necessary attention to the circumstances of those times, wherein Europe, from her frequent dangers of being subjected to the house of Austria, and by the bloody wars which a difference of religion had excited, and continued daily to excite, found herself in a manner compelled to have recourse to extraordinary means to put a period to her miseries. I cannot finish this remark better than in the words of M. l'Abbé de Saint-Pierre, in his *Discours sur le Grand Homme*: "From hence we may perceive, that if Henry IV., King of France, had executed his celebrated and well-projected design, whereby to render peace perpetual and universal among the sovereigns of Europe, he would have procured the greatest possible benefit, not only to his own subjects, but to all the Christian kingdoms, and even, by a necessary consequence, to the world in general; a benefit of which all generations, present and to come, would have participated down to the latest time; a benefit by which we should have been exempted from those terrible and numerous evils which are the effects of foreign and domestic wars; a benefit which would have been the source of all those sweets which naturally flow from an uninterrupted and universal tranquillity; — if, I say, he had been so happy as to have executed this great design, it would have rendered him, beyond all comparison, the greatest man the world ever has produced or probably ever will produce." After some further reflections upon the means still more practicable, this judicious author adds: "This prince,

however, has always had the honour of being considered as the author of the most important invention, and most useful discovery for the benefit of mankind, that has yet appeared in the world; the execution of which may, perhaps, be reserved by Providence for the greatest and most capable of his successors."

With the great body of controversial literature upon the subject which has followed are associated the names of Cornelius, Ritter, Kùkelhaus, Philipson, and Pfister. The critical view is sufficiently stated for the general reader by Kitchin, in his *History of France*, as follows :

French historians are much divided respecting the problem of the Christian Republic; for while they wish to believe in so splendid a conception of the international position of France, as the great central figure round which all the rest are grouped, their historic sense and judgment compel them to doubt, if not to deny, the genuineness of the document on which it rests. . . . No other writer of the age alludes to the scheme. It would have been communicated, more or less fully, to several of the Cabinets of Europe, yet dead silence prevails; no minister, for example, of either Elizabeth or James alludes to it. This, taken with the weakness of the evidence in the *Œconomies*, is conclusive against the genuineness of the scheme with its magnificent chimera of an European Amphictyonic assembly. . . . It must not be supposed that Henry IV. had any such plan neatly drawn out, and ready for execution, when he made his preparations for appearing in Germany; on the contrary, he was not at all the man to have worked out any such elaborate design, for he had neither knowledge nor inclination for it. And besides this, there is internal proof which shows that it did not come from his hand. How could he, the tamer of the noblesse, who knew them so well, and was ever on his guard against them, have dreamt of proposing to carve out ten principalities on his northern frontier for ten great Lords of France?

Yet we must not absolutely deny the existence of any "great design" of the kind. It was an age of political speculations; men's attention was called to international questions, or invited to study the nature of states within their own borders; the classical examples

were much in vogue; men asked themselves as to Empires, as to Republics; the pen kept pace with the sword, and showed its new power in swaying public opinion. "Learning," as Hallam says of this time, "was employed in systematic analyses of ancient or modern forms of government"; these were the days of Bodinus' great work *De Republica*; now came out that singular collection of little books, the "Elzevir Republics"; the minds of men had passed from the Utopias of the previous age to more practical speculations as to what State-systems existed, or might exist. They were conscious that Europe had entered on an entirely new phase of being, and were eager to see how she would group herself, what would be the form of equilibrium to which they hoped she was tending. The great struggle of the Thirty Years' War in Germany is heralded by these anxious speculations; for the true decision of the form of European politics could never be come to, till Germany had fought out the still unsettled questions which vexed her from the Alps to the Baltic. The temper of mind corresponds to that which, in a somewhat similar age, agitated the French nation under Napoleon III., and led to maps of reconstructed Europe, and speculations on the equilibrium of states, and wars made "for an idea." Therefore there is nothing improbable in the existence of the scheme of a Christian Republic before 1610; rather, it is very credible; and if we may trust Sully (in the earlier part of the *Œconomies*) we may trace the genesis of some plan of the kind, though doubtless not so elaborate, in the sagacious speculations of Queen Elizabeth. Sully states distinctly that he and the Queen discussed the great project in 1601, and that she first sketched out the plan of it, which in outline answers to that of the Christian Republic. On her death the matter seems to have been re-opened to King James, who characteristically shrank from anything so large and decisive; though the young prince Henry, perhaps with an eye to a French marriage, professed his hearty liking for it. But James drew off from the French side, and in 1604 made a separate peace with Spain.

We shall not be far wrong if we say that during the last years of the life of Henry IV. he cherished hopes of overthrowing the Austro-Spanish dominion in Europe, by means of a combination of French with Dutch and North German interests; that England failed him, through her insular views, and the temper of her new monarch; that

this led him all the more to watch the movements in Germany and to strive to settle the outstanding Dutch struggle in favour of the Provinces; and in the end made him once more buckle on his armour for what might have been a decisive war. We may even go farther, and believe that Henry had formed large plans for the aggrandisement of the crown, not in the least plans of the lofty and disinterested kind attributed to him by Sully. Of this we have an account, which is probably correct, in Richelieu's *Memoirs*. The Cardinal describes him as opening out his plans in 1610 to the Queen: to reduce to his obedience Milan, Montferrat, Genoa, Naples; to present most of Milan and Montferrat to the Duke of Savoy, taking in exchange Nice and Savoy; to make Piedmont and the Milanese a kingdom; to call the Duke of Savoy (having lost his old territories) King of the Alps; and thus to secure the approaches of France into Italy; on the other side, having shown himself to the Italian princes as their friend (one fancies one hears the voice of Napoleon the Third!), to pass into Flanders and Germany, in order to wear out his enemies by fanning into flame the smouldering variances between North and South Germany, perhaps to make the Rhine his frontier, with three or four strong fortresses on it. We may conclude, finally, that the Christian Republic is not a formed scheme of Henry's planning, but a romance, based on facts, and encouraged by the bold projects of Queen Elizabeth, and the war-loving energy of the Duke of Sully.

This is the extreme critical view, and much that might be said to counteract it is obvious. It is not necessary here, however, to say it; for our primary concern is not with the authorship of the "Great Design." The work of the Abbé de l'Ecluse is to Dean Kitchin "audacious." That work was the very bold editing and rearrangement of Sully's *Memoirs*, to make the work more consecutive and readable. Many liberties were certainly taken with the text, from which confusions have resulted. L'Ecluse's edition was published in 1747; and Mrs. Charlotte Lennox made her English translation in 1755. This was revised in 1810, the text of L'Ecluse being modified through

comparison with the original edition of the *Memoirs* ; and the various editions which have followed in England and America have been reprints of this London work of 1810. The edition used for the present volume is that published in Bohn's Library in 1856. The notes are chiefly the notes of L'Écluse, although it will be seen that certain notes are those of the English editor.

The prime object of the "Great Design," as Sully states, was to reduce the House of Austria. It was therefore essentially a political scheme, however great its general virtues. The first plan for the federation of Europe which was at once comprehensive and disinterested was that of William Penn, published in 1693, thirty-one years after the publication of the "Great Design." It is noteworthy that at the close of his essay Penn appeals for reinforcement of his plan to Henry's similar scheme :

I confess I have the passion to wish heartily that the honor of proposing and effecting so great and good a design might be owing to England, of all the countries in Europe, as something of the nature of our expedient was, in design and preparation, to the wisdom, justice and valor of Henry the Fourth of France, whose superior qualities raising his character above those of his ancestors or contemporaries deservedly gave him the style of Henry the Great. For he was upon obliging the princes and estates of Europe to a politic balance, when the Spanish faction, for that reason, contrived and accomplished his murder by the band of Ravilliac. I will not then fear to be censured for proposing an expedient for the present and future peace of Europe, when it was not only the design but glory of one of the greatest princes that ever reigned in it. This great King's example tells us it is fit to be done.

In 1623, in Sully's lifetime, and forty years before the account of the "Great Design" was published in the last volume of his *Memoirs*, Eméric Crucé published in Paris

his little book entitled *Le Nouveau Cynée*, which contained the first distinct proposal for substituting international arbitration for war. It was long believed that the only existing copy of this remarkable work was that in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. There was a copy, however, in the library of Charles Sumner, bequeathed by him to Harvard University; and this copy, long overlooked, has, during the last year, been brought to light, and a translation of it will be published immediately in the International Library. It is noteworthy as the first flowering of the peace cause on French soil, the creation of one who was living in Paris during the reign of Henry the Fourth. We cannot forget either that it was as an exile in France that Grotius prepared his *Rights of War and Peace*, and that this appeared at almost the same moment that Crucé published his *Nouveau Cynée*.

Four years before the appearance of the last volume of Sully's *Memoirs*, containing the account of the "Great Design," was born the Abbé Saint-Pierre, who, not long after the appearance of William Penn's *Plan for the Permanent Peace of Europe*, published his famous *Project for settling Perpetual Peace in Europe*, in three volumes, the most comprehensive and thorough presentation of the subject of the better organization of the world which had ever, up to that time, been made. Saint-Pierre owed the inspiration of his effort directly to the "Great Design," viewing his plan as an elaboration of that. "It falls out happily for this project," he wrote, "that I am not the author of it. It was Henry the Great who was the inventor of it." Leibnitz, who in 1715 made the "Project" of Saint-Pierre the subject of an important paper in which he developed his own thoughts upon international organization, wrote



personally to the author, and took satisfaction in the fact that the project was supported by the practical authority of Henry the Fourth. Later Rousseau revived the project of Saint-Pierre, devoting a book to it; and in a subsequent pamphlet on Perpetual Peace he wrote :

I require only, in order to prove that the project of the Christian Republic is not chimerical, to name its first author; for assuredly Henry IV. was no fool, nor was Sully a visionary. The Abbé Saint-Pierre felt himself warranted by these great names in reviving their system. But what a difference in the times, the circumstances, the proposal, the manner of doing it, and in the author! To judge of this difference let us glance at the general situation of affairs at the moment chosen by Henry IV. for the execution of his project. . . . But without anything transpiring of these grand designs, everything marched on in silence towards their execution. Twice Sully went to London; the party was united in alliance with King James I., and the King of Sweden was pledged on his side; the league was concluded with the Protestants of Germany; they were even sure of the Princes of Italy; and all contributed towards the great object without being able to say what it was, just like the workmen who labour separately at the parts of a new machine of which they do not know the form or the use. . . . To so many preparations add, for the conduct of the enterprise, the same zeal and the same prudence as had gone to its formation, quite as much on the part of Henry's minister as on his own; at the head of the enterprise a captain such as himself, while his adversary had nothing more to oppose to him, and you will be able to judge whether anything which might be deemed favourable to success was absent from the promise of his. Without having penetrated his views, Europe, attentive to his immense preparations, awaited their results with a kind of terror. A slight pretext was to give rise to this great revolution; a war, which was to be the last, was preparing an immortal peace, when an event, whose horrible mystery must deepen the terror of it, banished for ever the last hope of the world. The same blow which cut short the days of the good King plunged Europe anew into the eternal wars which she could no longer hope to see come to an end. Be that as it may, these are the

means which Henry IV. collected together for forming the same establishment that the Abbé Saint-Pierre intended to form with a book. Beyond doubt permanent peace is at present but an idle fancy; but given only a Henry IV. and a Sully, and permanent peace will become once more a reasonable project.

The work of Saint-Pierre and Rousseau met with a wide and warm response throughout Europe. One fruit in Germany was the work of Totze at Göttingen in 1763, entitled *Permanent and Universal Peace, according to the Plan of Henry the Fourth*.

Here in the United States we remember — and we remember it with peculiar tenderness and gratitude at this hour — that the American who first conspicuously and enthusiastically urged upon his countrymen attention to the "Great Design" of Henry IV. was Edward Everett Hale. This was in an article entitled "The United States of Europe," published in his magazine, *Old and New*, in 1871, the time of the Franco-German war. That article is so interesting, and now so memorable, that it is incorporated in the present volume.

"Has there ever been a moment," asked Dr. Hale in this historic paper in 1871, "when all true men could act together, as in this sea of troubles they might act to establish the United States of Europe? And if the great man of Europe, whoever he may be, speaks that great word, and lays the plans for that great harmony, may not this land of ours, which has given the great example, do more than any land to make real the sublime idea? Our statesmanship, our policy, our international science, — they have no object at this moment so noble, nay, they have none so real, as the advance, by one of the great strides of history, of a permanent peace among the States of Christendom."



Dr. Hale spoke the same word with power in 1899, as, at the call of another European monarch, the representatives of the nations were gathering, in behalf of the world's organization, at The Hague. He is speaking it to us still to-day, while this struggle for permanent peace among the States of Christendom still goes on. Let us hear his voice as we turn anew the pages of the "Great Design."

EDWIN D. MEAD

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS



# THE GREAT DESIGN OF HENRY IV

FROM THE MEMOIRS OF THE DUKE  
OF SULLY

As this part of these Memoirs will be entirely taken up with an account of the great design of Henry IV., or the political scheme by which he proposed to govern, not only France, but all Europe, it may not be improper to begin it with some more general reflections on this monarchy, and on the Roman Empire, upon whose ruins we know it has been formed, as well as all the other powers which at this day compose the Christian world.

If we consider all those successive changes which Rome has suffered from the year of the world 3064, which is that of its foundation,<sup>1</sup> its infancy, youth, and virility, its declension, fall, and final ruin; those vicissitudes, which it experienced in common with the great monarchies by which it was preceded, would almost incline one to believe that empires, like all other sublunary things, are subject to be the sport, and at last to sink under the pressure, of time. And if we extend this idea still further, we shall, perhaps, perceive that they are all liable to be disturbed or interrupted in

<sup>1</sup> The opinion now most generally received is that of Varro, who places the time of the foundation of Rome nearly two hundred years later.

their courses by certain extraordinary incidents, which, for anything that we can discover to the contrary, may be termed epidemical distempers, that very frequently hasten their destruction; and their cure by this discovery becoming easier, we may at least save some of them from those catastrophies which are so fatal to them.

But if we endeavour to discover more visible and natural causes of the ruin of this vast and formidable empire, we shall perhaps soon perceive they were produced by a deviation from those wise laws and that simplicity of manners, which were the original of all its grandeur, into luxury, avarice, and ambition; yet there was, finally, another cause, the effect of which could hardly have been prevented or foreseen by the utmost human wisdom; I mean the irruptions of those vast bodies of barbarous people, Goths, Vandals, Huns, Herulians, Rugians, Lombards, &c., from whom, both separately and united, the Roman Empire received such violent shocks that it was at last overthrown by them. Rome was three times sacked by these barbarians; in 414, under Honorius, by Alaric, chief of the Goths; in 455, by Genseric, king of the Vandals, under Martian; and in 546, under Justinian, by Totila and the Goths.<sup>1</sup> Now, if it be true that after this the city retained the shadow of what she had been, if we must regard her as divested of the empire of the world, when her weakness and the abuses of her government made this event to be looked upon, not simply as inevitable, but as very near, and, in fact, already arrived, the epocha of her fall may then be marked long before the reign of Valentinian III., to whom it will be doing a favour

<sup>1</sup> These three epochas are not quite just: the first was in 410, instead of 414; the second in 455 or 456; and the third in 524, under Tegas, successor of Totila, and the last king of the Goths; the sacking the city this last time lasted forty days.

to call the last emperor of the West;<sup>1</sup> for several of those emperors whom he succeeded were, in reality, no better than tyrants, by whom the empire was torn and divided, and the shattered remnants left to be the spoil of the barbarians, who, indeed, by their conquests, acquired an equal right to them.

Rome, nevertheless, still beheld, at intervals, some faint appearances of a revival; those of which she was most sensible were under the reign of the great Constantine, whose victories once more united this vast body under one head; but when he transported the seat of his empire from Rome to Constantinople, he, by that step, without being sensible of it, contributed more to the destruction of a work which had cost him so much labour than all the ill conduct of his predecessors had been able to effect; and this even he rendered irremediable, by dividing his empire equally between his three sons. Theodosius, who, by good fortune, or from an effect of his great valour, found himself in the same circumstances with Constantine, would not, perhaps, have committed the same fault had he not been influenced by the force of Constantine's example; but this, in a manner, necessarily obliged him to divide his empire in two — Arcadius had the East, Honorius the West; and from that time there never was any hopes or opportunity of reuniting them.

According to the order of nature, by which the destruction of one thing contributes to the production of others, so, in proportion as the most distant members of the empire of the West fell off from it, from thence there arose

<sup>1</sup> It would be unjust surely to refuse the title of Emperors of the West to Valentinian III., to Honorius, &c. The expressions here used by our author should not be understood in their most rigorous sense, but only as meaning an empire weakening, and approaching to its final destruction.

kingdoms; though indeed they did not at first bear that rank. The most ancient of these (its origin appearing to have been in the eighth year of the empire of Honorius) is, undoubtedly, that which was founded in Gaul by the French, so called from Franconia, from whence they were invited by the Gauls, who inhabited the countries about the Moselle, to assist them in their deliverance from the oppression of the Roman armies. It being a custom among these Franks, or French, to confer the title of king upon whatever person they chose to be their leader, if the first or second of these chiefs did not bear it, it is certain, at least, that the third, which was Merovius, and more particularly Clovis, who was the fifth, were invested with it;<sup>1</sup> and some of them supported it with so much glory — among others Pepin and Charles Martel, to whom it would be doing an injustice to refuse them this dignity — that their worthy successor, Charlemagne, revived in Gaul an imperfect image of the now extinguished empire in the West: this, indeed, was facilitated by those natural advantages France enjoys of numerous inhabitants trained to war, and a great plenty of all things serving the different necessities of life, joined to a very great convenience for commerce, arising from

<sup>1</sup> The whole of what is here said may be allowed to be right; according to Petau and Sirmond, the chiefs of the French bore the title of kings from the reign of Valentinian II., which was long before the year 445, when Claudian, by the taking of Cambray, &c., first established himself on this side of the Rhine. They first established themselves on the other side of the Rhine about the middle of the third century, and extended themselves nearly from the Texel as far as Frankfort. This revolt of a part of Gaul against the Romans happened in 434, in the twelfth year of the reign of Valentinian III.; and the author's opinion on the establishment of the French in Gaul is confirmed by a learned academician, who has cleared up this critical point as much as it was possible (the late Abbé Du Bois). (*Hist. Crit. de l'Etab. de la Monarchie Franç. dans les Gaules*, tom. i. liv. i. chap. 17; liv. ii. chap. 7, 8.)

its situation, which renders it the centre of four of the principal powers of Europe — Germany, Italy, Spain, and Britain, with the Low Countries.

Let us here just say one word upon the three races which compose the succession of our kings: in the first of them I find only Merovius, Clovis I., and Clotharius II.; Charles Martel, Pepin le Bref, and Charlemagne in the second, who have raised themselves above the common level of their race. Take away these six from the thirty-five which we compute in these two races, and all the rest, from their vices or their incapacity, appear to have been either wicked kings, or but the shadow of kings; though among them we may distinguish some good qualities in Sigibert and Dagobert, and a very great devotion in Louis le Débonnaire, which, however, ended in his repenting the loss of empire and his kingdom, together with his liberty, in a cloister.

The Carlovingian race having reigned obscurely, and ended so too, the crown then descended upon a third race, the first four kings of which, in my opinion, appear to have been perfect models of wise and good government. The kingdom which came under their dominion had lost much of its original splendour, for, from its immense extent in the time of Charlemagne, it was reduced to very nearly the same bounds which it has at this day, with this difference, that though they might have been desirous to restore its ancient limits, the form of the government, which rendered the kings subject to the great men and people of the kingdom, who had a right to choose and even to govern their sovereigns, left them no means by which they could succeed in such an attempt. The conduct, therefore, which they pursued was to condemn arbitrary power to an



absolute silence, and, in its place, to substitute equity itself, a kind of dominion which never excites envy. Nothing now was done without the consent of the great men and the principal cities, and almost always in consequence of the decision of an assembly of the states. A conduct so moderate and prudent put an end to all factions and stifled all conspiracies, which are fatal to the state or the sovereign. Regularity, economy, a distinction of merit, strict observance of justice, all the virtues which we suppose necessary qualifications for the good of a family, were what characterised this new government, and produced what was never before beheld, and what, perhaps, we may never see again — an uninterrupted peace for one hundred and twenty-two years. What these princes gained by it for themselves in particular, and which all the authority of the Salique law could never have procured them, was the advantage of introducing into this house an hereditary right to the crown. But they, nevertheless, thought it a necessary precaution not to declare their eldest sons their successors till they had modestly asked the consent of the people, preceded it by a kind of election, and usually by having them crowned in their own lifetime, and seated with them upon the throne.

Philip II., whom Louis VII., his father, caused to be crowned and to reign with him in this manner, was the first who neglected to observe this ceremony between the sovereign and his people: several victories, obtained over his neighbours and over his own subjects, which gained him the surname of Augustus, served to open him a passage to absolute power; and a notion of the fitness and legality of this power, by the assistance of favourites, ministers, and others, became afterwards so strongly imprinted in his successors, that they looked upon it as a mark of



the most profound good policy to act contrary to those maxims, the general and particular utility of which had been so effectually confirmed by experience. And this they did without any fear, or, perhaps, without any conception of the fatal consequences which such a proceeding, against a nation that adored its liberty, might, and even necessarily would, incur; of which they might easily have become sensible, from the means to which the people had immediate recourse, to shake off the yoke of tyranny with which they saw themselves menaced. The kings could never obtain of their people any other than that kind of constrained obedience which always inclines them to embrace with eagerness all opportunities of mutiny. This was the source of a thousand bloody wars: that by which almost all France was ravaged by the English; that which we carried on with Italy, Burgundy, and Spain; all of them can be attributed to no other causes than the civil dissensions by which they were preceded: and here the weakest side, stifling the voice of honour and the interest of the nation, constantly called in foreigners to assist them in the support of their tottering liberties. These were shameful and fatal remedies; but from that time they were constantly employed, and even to our days by the house of Lorraine, in a league, for which religion was nothing more than the pretence. Another evil, which may at first appear to be of a different kind, but which, in my opinion, proceeds from the same source, was a general corruption of manners, a thirst for riches, and a most shameful degree of luxury; these, sometimes separately and sometimes united, were alternate causes and effects of many of our miseries.

Thus, in a few words, I have exposed the various species of our bad policy with respect both to the form of the

government, successively subjected to the will of the people, the soldiers, the nobles, the states, and the kings; and in regard to the persons likewise of these last, whether dependent, elective, hereditary, or absolute.

From the picture here laid before us, we may be enabled to form our judgment upon the third race of our kings; we may find a thousand things to admire in Philip Augustus, Saint-Louis, Philip le Bel, Charles le Sage, Charles VII., and Louis XII. But it is to be lamented that so many virtues, or great qualities, have been exercised upon no better principles; with what pleasure might we bestow upon them the titles of great kings, could we but conceal that their people were miserable; what might we not, in particular, say of Louis IX.? Of the forty-four years which he reigned, the first twenty of them exhibit a scene not unworthy to be compared with the eleven last of Henry the Great; but I am afraid all their glory will appear to have been destroyed in the twenty-four following, wherein it appears that the excessive taxes upon the subjects to satisfy an ill-judged and destructive devotion, immense sums transported into the most distant countries for the ransom of prisoners, so many thousand subjects sacrificed, so many illustrious houses extinguished, caused a universal mourning throughout France, and all together a general calamity.

Let us for once, if it be possible, fix our principles; and being from long experience convinced that the happiness of mankind can never arise from war, of which we ought to have been persuaded long ago, let us upon this principle take a cursory view of the history of our monarchy. We will pass by the wars of Clovis and his predecessors, because they seem to have been in some degree necessary to confirm the recent foundations of the monarchy: but what

shall we say of those wars in which the four sons of Clovis, the four sons of Clotharius II., and their descendants were engaged, during the uninterrupted course of one hundred and sixty years? and of those also by which, for the space of one hundred and seventy-two other years, commencing with Louis le Débonnaire, the kingdom was harassed and torn? What follows is still worse: the slightest knowledge of our history is sufficient to convince any one that there was no real tranquillity in the kingdom from Henry III. to the peace of Vervins; and, in short, all this long period may be called a war of near four hundred years' duration. After this examination, from whence it incontestably appears that our kings have seldom thought of anything but how to carry on their wars, we cannot but be scrupulous in bestowing on them the title of truly great kings; though we shall, nevertheless, render them all the justice which appears to have been their due: for I confess (as indeed it would be unjust to attribute to them only a crime which was properly that of all Europe) that several of these princes were sometimes in such circumstances as rendered the wars just, and even necessary; and from hence, when indeed there was no other means to obtain it, they acquired a true and lasting glory. For herein, from the manner in which several of these wars were foreseen, prepared for, and conducted, we may in their councils discover such master-strokes of policy, and in their persons such noble instances of courage, as are deserving of our highest praises. From whence then can proceed the error of so many exploits, in appearance so glorious, though the effect of them has generally been the devastation both of France and all Europe? I repeat it again, of all Europe, which even yet seems scarcely sensible that in her present situation — a

situation in which she has been for several centuries — every attempt which shall tend to her subjection, or only to the too considerably augmenting of any one of her principal monarchies at the expense of the others, can never be any other than a chimerical and impossible enterprise, there are none of these monarchies whose destruction will not require a concurrence of causes infinitely superior to all human force. The whole, therefore, of what seems proper and necessary to be done, is to support them all in a kind of equilibrium; and whatever prince thinks, and in consequence acts, otherwise, may indeed cause torrents of blood to flow through all Europe, but he will never be able to change her form.

When I observed that the extent of France is not now so considerable as it was in the time of Charlemagne, my intention, most certainly, was not that this diminution should be considered as a misfortune. In an age when we feel the sad effects of having had ambitious princes from time to time for our kings, were all to concur in flattering this fatal ambition it would be the cause of still greater evils; and it may be generally observed that the larger the extent of kingdoms, the more they are subject to great revolutions and misfortunes. The basis of the tranquillity of our own, in particular, depends upon preserving it within its present limits. A climate, laws, manners, and language, different from our own; seas, and chains of mountains almost inaccessible, are all so many barriers which we may consider as fixed even by nature. Besides, what is it that France wants? Will she not always be the richest and most powerful kingdom in Europe? It must be granted. All, therefore, which the French have to wish or desire is, that Heaven may grant them pious, good, and wise kings; and that these

kings may employ their power in preserving the peace of Europe; for no other enterprise can, truly, be to them either profitable or successful.

And this explains to us the nature of the design which Henry IV. was on the point of putting in execution when it pleased God to take him to himself, too soon by some years for the happiness of the world. From hence likewise we may perceive the motives for his pursuing a conduct so opposite to anything that had hitherto been undertaken by crowned heads; and here we may behold what it was that acquired him the title of "great." His designs were not inspired by a mean and despicable ambition, nor guided by base and partial interests: to render France happy for ever was his desire; and as she cannot perfectly enjoy this felicity unless all Europe likewise partakes of it, so it was the happiness of Europe in general which he laboured to procure, and this in a manner so solid and durable that nothing should afterwards be able to shake its foundations.

I must confess I am under some apprehensions lest this scheme should at first be considered as one of those darling chimeras, or idle political speculations, in which a mind susceptible of strange and singular ideas may be so easily engaged; those who shall think thus of it, must be of that sort of people on whom the first impressions upon a prejudiced imagination have the force of truth; or those who, by their distance from the times and their ignorance of the circumstances, confound the wisest and noblest enterprises that have ever been formed, with those chimerical projects which princes, intoxicated with their power, have in all ages amused themselves in forming. I confess that if we attentively examine the designs which have been planned from motives of vanity, confidence in good fortune,

ignorance, nay, from sloth, and even timidity itself, we must be surprised to behold sovereigns plunged blindly into schemes, specious perhaps in appearance, but which, at bottom, have not the least degree of possibility. The mind of man pursues with so much complacency, nay, even with so much ardour, whatever it fancies great or beautiful, that it is sorry to be made sensible that these objects have frequently nothing real or solid in them. But in this, as well as in other things, there is an opposite extreme to be avoided; which is, that as we usually fail in the execution of great designs from not commencing and continuing them with sufficient vigour and spirit, so likewise we are defective in the knowledge of their true worth and tendency, because we do not thoroughly and properly consider them in all their dependencies and consequences. I have myself been more difficult to persuade in this matter than perhaps any of those who shall read these Memoirs, and this I consider as an effect of that cold, cautious, and unenterprising temper, which makes so considerable a part of my character.

I remember the first time the king spoke to me of a political system by which all Europe might be regulated and governed as one great family, I scarcely paid any attention to what he said, imagining that he meant no more by it than merely to divert himself, or perhaps to show that his thoughts on political subjects were greater, and penetrated deeper, than most others; my reply was a mixture of pleasantry and compliment. Henry said no more at that time. He often confessed to me afterwards that he had long concealed from me what he meditated on this subject, from a principle of shame, which many labour under, lest they should disclose designs which might appear ridiculous



or impossible. I was astonished when, some time after, he renewed our conversation on this head, and continued from year to year to entertain me with new regulations and new improvements in his scheme.

I had been very far from thinking seriously about it. If by accident it came into my thoughts for a moment, the first view of the design, which supposed a reunion of all the different states of Europe — immense expenses, at a time when France could scarcely supply her own necessities — a concatenation of events which to me appeared infinite, — these were considerations which had always made me reject the thought as vain; I even apprehended there was some illusion in it. I recollected some of those enterprises in which we had endeavoured to engage Europe. I considered those in particular which had been formed by some of our kings, from much less considerable motives, and I felt myself disgusted with this, from the bad success of all the former. The disposition of the princes of Europe to take umbrage against France, when she would have assisted them to dissipate their fears from the too great power of Spain, this alone appeared to me an insurmountable obstacle.

Strongly prejudiced by this opinion, I used my utmost efforts to undeceive Henry, who, on his side, surprised not to find me of his opinion in any one point, immediately undertook and readily succeeded in convincing me, that my thus indiscriminately condemning all parts of his project, in which he was certain that everything at least was not blamable, could proceed from nothing but strong prejudices. I could not refuse, at his solicitations, to use my endeavours to gain a thorough comprehension of it: I formed a clearer plan of it in my mind: I collected and

united all its different branches: I studied all its proportions and dimensions, if I may say so; and I discovered in them a regularity and mutual dependence, of which, when I only considered the design in a confused and careless manner, I had not been at all sensible. The benefit which would manifestly arise from it to all Europe, was what most immediately struck me, as being in effect the plainest and most evident; but the means to effect so good a design were, therefore, what I hesitated at the longest. The general situation of the affairs of Europe, and of our own in particular, appeared to me every way contrary to the execution: I did not consider that, as the execution of it might be deferred till a proper opportunity, we had all those resources whereby to prepare ourselves, which time affords those who know how to make the best use of it. I was at last convinced, that however disproportionate the means might appear to the effect, a course of years, during which everything should as much as possible be made subservient to the great object in view, would surmount many difficulties. It is indeed somewhat extraordinary, that this point, which appeared to be, and really was, the most difficult of any, should at last become the most easy.

Having thus seen all parts of the design in their just points of view, having thoroughly considered and calculated, and from thence discovered and prepared for all events which might happen, I found myself confirmed in the opinion, that the design of Henry the Great was, upon the whole, just in its intention, possible, and even practicable in all its parts, and infinitely glorious in all its effects: so that, upon all occasions, I was the first to recall the king to his engagements, and sometimes to convince him by those very arguments which he himself had taught me.



The constant attention this prince paid to all affairs transacted around him, from an effect of those singularly unhappy circumstances, by which, in almost in every instant of his life, he found himself embarrassed, had been the cause of his forming this design, even from the time when, being called to the crown by the death of Henry III., he considered the humbling of the house of Austria as absolutely necessary for his security; yet, if he was not beholden to Elizabeth<sup>1</sup> for his thought of the design, it is, however, certain that this great queen had herself conceived it long before, as a means to revenge Europe for the attempts of its common enemy. The troubles in which all the following years were engaged, the war which succeeded in 1595, and that against Savoy after the peace of Vervins, forced Henry into difficulties which obliged him to lay aside all thoughts of other affairs; and it was not till after his marriage, and the firm reëstablishment of peace, that he renewed his thoughts upon his first design, to execute which appeared then more impossible, or at least more improbable, than ever.

<sup>1</sup> The present Duke of Sully is possessed of the original of an excellent letter of Henry the Great, supposed to have been written by him to Queen Elizabeth, though this princess is not named, either in the body of the letter, or in the superscription, which is in these words: "To her who merits immortal praise." The terms in which Henry herein speaks of a certain political project, which he calls "The most excellent and rare enterprise that ever the human mind conceived — a thought rather divine than human;" the praises which he bestows upon "this discourse so well connected and demonstrative of what would be necessary for the government of empires and kingdoms" — on those "conceptions and resolutions" from which nothing less may be hoped than "most remarkable issues both of honour and glory," — all these passages can relate to none but Elizabeth, nor mean any other than the great design in question, concerning which it evidently appears from hence, that the Queen of England had by letters disclosed her thoughts to Henry. The letter from which these extracts are taken is dated from Paris, the 11th of July, but without the date of the year. (*Lettres d'Henry le Grand.*)

He nevertheless communicated it by letters to Elizabeth,<sup>1</sup> and this was what inspired them with so strong an inclination to confer together in 1601, when this princess came to Dover, and Henry to Calais. What the ceremony of an interview would not have permitted them to do, I at last began by the voyage which I had made to this princess. I found her deeply engaged in the means by which this great design might be successfully executed; and, notwithstanding the difficulties which she apprehended in its two principal points, namely, the agreement of religions and the equality of the powers, she did not appear to me at all to doubt of its success, which she chiefly expected, for a reason the justness of which I have since been well convinced of; and this was, that, as the plan was really only contrary to the design of some princes, whose ambitious views were sufficiently known to Europe, this difficulty, from which the necessity of the design more evidently appeared, would rather promote than retard its success. She further said, that its execution by any other means than that of arms, would be very desirable, as this had always something odious in it: but she confessed that indeed it would be hardly possible to begin it any other wise. A very great number of the articles, conditions, and different dispositions are due to this queen, and sufficiently show, that in respect of wisdom, penetration, and all the other perfections of the mind, she was not inferior to any king the most truly deserving of that title.

It must indeed be considered as a very great misfortune that Henry could not at this time second the intentions of the Queen of England, who wished to have the design put in immediate execution; but when he thus laid the

<sup>1</sup> Compare the above with what is said on p. 61.

foundation of the edifice, he scarcely hoped to see the time when the finishing hand would be put to it. The recovery of his own kingdom from the various maladies by which it was afflicted was a work of several years, and unhappily he had himself seen forty-eight when he began it; he pursued it, nevertheless, with the greatest vigour. The edict of Nantes had been published with this view, and every other means was used which might gain the respect and confidence of the princes of Europe. Henry and I, at the same time, applied ourselves with indefatigable labour to regulate the interior affairs of the kingdom. We considered the death of the King of Spain as the most favourable event that could happen for our design: but it received so violent a shock by the death of Elizabeth, as had like to have made us abandon all our hopes. Henry had no expectation that the powers of the north, nor King James, the successor of Elizabeth (when he was acquainted with his character), would any of them so readily consent to support him in his design as this princess had done. However, the new allies which he daily gained in Germany, and even in Italy, consoled him a little for the loss of Elizabeth. The truce between Spain and the Low Countries may also be numbered among incidents favourable to it.

Yet, if we consider all the obstacles which afterwards arose in his own kingdom, from the Protestants, the Catholics, the clergy, nay even from his own council, it will appear as if all things conspired against it. Will it be believed that Henry could not find in his whole council one person, besides myself, to whom he could, without danger, disclose the whole of his designs? and that the respect due to him could scarcely restrain those who appeared most devoted to his service from treating as wild and extravagant

chimeras what he had entrusted to them with the greatest circumspection. But nothing discouraged him : he was an abler politician and a better judge than all his council, and all his kingdom ; and when he perceived that, notwithstanding all these obstacles, affairs began, both at home and abroad, to appear in a favourable situation, he then considered the success as infallible.

Nor will this his judgment, when thoroughly considered, be found so presumptuous as, from a slight examination, it may appear to some. For what did he hereby require of Europe ? Nothing more than that it should promote the means by which he proposed to fix it in the position, towards which, by his efforts, it had for some time tended. These means he rendered so easy of execution that it would scarcely require what many of the princes of Europe would voluntarily sacrifice for advantages much less real, less certain, and less durable. What they would gain by it, besides the inestimable benefits arising from peace, would greatly exceed all the expenses they would be at. What reason then could any of them have to oppose it ? And if they did not oppose it, how could the house of Austria support itself against powers in whom the desire and pleasure of depriving it of that strength which it had used only to oppress them would have raised against it as many open as it had secret enemies — that is, the whole of Europe ? Nor would these princes have any reason to be jealous of the restorer of their liberty ; for he was so far from seeking to reimburse himself for all the expenses which his generosity would hereby engage him in, that his intention was to relinquish voluntarily and for ever all power of augmenting his dominions ; not only by conquest, but by every other just and lawful means. By this he would have

discovered the secret of convincing all his neighbours that his whole design was to save both himself and them those immense sums which the maintenance of so many thousand soldiers, so many fortified places, and so many military expenses require; to free them for ever from the fear of those bloody catastrophes so common in Europe; to procure them an uninterrupted repose; and finally, to unite them all in an indissoluble bond of security and friendship, after which they might live together like brethren, and reciprocally visit like good neighbours, without the trouble of ceremony, and without the expense of a train of attendants, which princes use at best only for ostentation, and frequently to conceal their misery. Does it not indeed reflect shame and reproach on a people who affect to be so polished and refined in their manners, that all their pretended wisdom has not yet, I will not say procured them tranquillity, but only guarded them from those barbarities which they detest in nations the most savage and uncultivated? And to destroy these pernicious seeds of confusion and disorder, and to prevent the barbarities of which they are the cause, could any scheme have been more happily and perfectly contrived than that of Henry the Great?

Here then is all that could be reasonably expected or required. It is only in the power of man to prepare and act; success is the work of a more mighty hand. Sensible people cannot be blamed for being prejudiced in favour of the scheme in question, from this circumstance only, that it was formed by the two potentates whom posterity will always consider as the most perfect models of the art of governing. In regard to Henry in particular, I insist that it belongs only to princes who, like him, have had a constant succession of obstacles to encounter in all their designs.

These, I say, are the princes who alone are privileged to judge what are real obstacles ; and, when we behold them willing to lay down their lives in support of their opinions, surely we may abide by their sentiments, without fear of being deceived. For my own part, I shall always think with regret, that France, by the blow which it received by the loss of this great prince, was deprived of a glory far superior to that which his reign had acquired.<sup>1</sup> There remains only to explain the several parts of the design, and the manner in which they were to be executed. We will begin with what relates to religion.

→ Two religions principally prevail in Christendom, the Roman and the Reformed ; but, as this latter has admitted of several modifications in its worship, which render it, if not as different from itself as from the Roman, at least as far from being reunited, it is therefore necessary to divide it into two, one of which may be called the Reformed, and the other the Protestant religion. The manner in which these three religions prevail in Europe is extremely different. Italy and Spain remain in possession of the Roman religion, pure and without mixture of any other. The Reformed religion subsists in France with the Roman, only under favour of the edicts, and is the weakest. England, Denmark, Sweden, the Low Countries, and Switzerland, have also a mixture of the same kind, but with this difference, that in them the Protestant is the governing religion, the others are only tolerated. Germany unites all these,

<sup>1</sup> From hence we may discover what credit should be given to Siri, when he says that the sole passion of Henry the Great was to amass riches ; that his minister forced him into the design against his inclination ; and that the Duke of Sully, whom he believes to be the sole author of it, was himself prepossessed in its favour only from mere obstinacy, or perhaps from motives of self-interest.



and even in several of its circles, as well as in Poland, shows them equal favour. I say nothing of Muscovy or Russia: these vast countries, which are not less than six hundred leagues in length, and four hundred in breadth, being in great part still idolaters, and in part schismatics, such as Greeks and Armenians, who have introduced so many superstitious practices in their worship, that there scarcely remains any conformity with us among them, besides that they belong to Asia at least as much as to Europe; we may indeed almost consider them as a barbarous country, and place them in the same class with Turkey, though for these five hundred years we have ranked them among the Christian powers.

Each of these three religions being now established in Europe in such a manner that there is not the least appearance that any of them can be destroyed, and experience having sufficiently demonstrated the inutility and danger of such an enterprise, the best therefore that can be done is to preserve and even strengthen all of them, in such a manner, nevertheless, that this indulgence may not become an encouragement to the production of new sects or opinions, which should carefully be suppressed on their first appearance. God himself, by manifestly supporting what the Catholics were pleased to call the new religion, has taught us this conduct, which is not less conformable to the Holy Scriptures than confirmed by its examples; and, besides, the insurmountable difficulty of forcing the pope's authority to be received in those places where it is now no longer acknowledged, renders what is here proposed absolutely necessary. Several cardinals equally sagacious and zealous, and even some popes, as Clement VIII. and Paul V., were of this opinion.

All, therefore, that remains now to be done, is to strengthen the nations, who have made choice of one of these religions, in the principles they profess, as there is nothing in all respects so pernicious as a liberty in belief; and those nations, whose inhabitants profess several, or all these religions, should be careful to observe those rules which they find necessary to remedy the ordinary inconveniences of a toleration which, in other respects, they probably experience to be beneficial. Italy, therefore, professing the Roman religion, and being moreover the residence of the popes, should preserve this religion in all its purity, and there would be no hardship in obliging all its inhabitants either to conform to it or quit the country. The same regulation, very nearly, might be observed in regard to Spain. In such states as that of France, where there is at least a governing religion, whoever should think the regulation too severe, by which Calvinism would be always subordinate to the religion of the prince, might be permitted to depart the country. No new regulation would be necessary in any of the other nations; no violence on this account, but liberty unrestrained, seeing this liberty is become even a fundamental principle in their governments.

Thus we may perceive that everything on this head might be reduced to a very few maxims, so much the more certain and invariable, as they were not contrary to the sentiments of any one. The Protestants are very far from pretending to force their religion upon any of their neighbours, by whom it is not voluntarily embraced. The Catholics, doubtless, are of the same sentiments, and the pope would receive no injury in being deprived of what he confesses himself not to have possessed for a long time. His sacrificing these chimerical rights would be abundantly compensated by the



regal dignity with which it would be proper to invest him, and by the honour of being afterwards the common mediator between all the Christian princes, a dignity which he would then enjoy without jealousy, and for which it must be confessed this court, by its sagacious conduct, has shown itself the most proper of any.

Another point of the political scheme, which also concerns religion, relates to the infidel princes of Europe, and consists in forcing those entirely out of it who refuse to conform to any of the Christian doctrines of religion. Should the Grand Duke of Muscovy, or Czar of Russia, who is believed to be the ancient Khan of Scythia, refuse to enter into the association after it is proposed to him, he ought to be treated like the Sultan of Turkey, deprived of his possessions in Europe, and confined to Asia only, where he might, as long as he pleased, without any interruption from us, continue the wars in which he is almost constantly engaged against the Turks and Persians.

To succeed in the execution of this, which will not appear difficult, if we suppose that all Christian princes unanimously concurred in it, it would only be necessary for each of them to contribute, in proportion to their several abilities, towards the support of the forces, and all the other incidental expenses, which the success of such an enterprise might require. These respective quotas were to have been determined by a general council, of which we shall speak hereafter. The following is what Henry the Great had himself conceived on this head. The pope, for this expedition, should furnish eight thousand foot, twelve hundred horse, ten cannons, and ten galleys; the emperor and the circles of Germany, sixty thousand foot, twenty thousand horse, five large cannons, and ten galleys or other

vessels; the King of France twenty thousand foot, four thousand horse, twenty cannons, and ten ships or galleys; Spain, Britain, Denmark, Sweden, and Poland, the like number with France, observing only, that these powers should together supply what belonged to the sea service in the manner most suitable to their respective conveniences and abilities therein; the King of Bohemia five thousand foot, fifteen hundred horse, and five cannons; the King of Hungary twelve thousand foot, five thousand horse, twenty cannons, and six ships; the Duke of Savoy, or King of Lombardy, eight thousand foot, fifteen hundred horse, eight cannons, and six galleys; the republic of Venice ten thousand foot, twelve hundred horse, ten cannons, and twenty-five galleys; the republic of the Swiss cantons fifteen thousand foot, five thousand horse, and twelve cannons; the republic of Holland twelve thousand foot, twelve hundred horse, twelve cannons, and twelve ships; the Italian republics ten thousand foot, twelve hundred horse, ten cannons, and eight galleys; the whole together amounting to about two hundred and seventy thousand foot, fifty thousand horse, two hundred cannons, and one hundred and twenty ships or galleys, equipped and maintained at the expense of all those powers, each contributing according to his particular proportion.

This armament of the princes and states of Europe appears so inconsiderable and so little burdensome, when compared with the forces which they usually keep on foot to awe their neighbours, or perhaps their own subjects, that were it to have subsisted, even perpetually, it would not have occasioned any inconvenience, and would have been an excellent military academy: but, besides that the enterprises for which it was destined would not always have

continued, the number and expense of it might have been diminished in proportion to the necessities, which would always have been the same. Though I am persuaded such an armament would have been so highly approved of by all these princes, that, after they had conquered with it whatever they would not suffer any stranger should share with them in Europe, they would have sought to join to it such parts of Asia as were most commodiously situated, and particularly the whole coast of Africa, which is too near to our own territories for us not to be frequently incommoded by it. The only precaution to be observed in regard to these additional countries would have been to form them into new kingdoms, declare them united with the rest of the Christian powers, and bestow them on different princes, carefully observing to exclude those who before bore rank among the sovereigns of Europe.

That part of the design which may be considered as purely political, turned almost entirely on a first preliminary, which, I think, would not have met with more difficulty than the preceding article. This was to divest the house of Austria of the empire, and of all the possessions in Germany, Italy, and the Low Countries: in a word, to reduce it to the sole kingdom of Spain, bounded by the Ocean, the Mediterranean, and the Pyreneean mountains. But that it might, nevertheless, be equally powerful with the other sovereignties of Europe, it should have Sardinia, Majorca, Minorca, and the other islands on its own coasts; the Canaries, the Azores, and Cape Verd, with its possessions in Africa; Mexico, and the American islands which belong to it, countries which alone might suffice to found great kingdoms; finally, the Philippines, Goa, the Moluccas, and its other possessions in Asia.

From hence a method seems to present itself, by which the house of Austria might be indemnified for what it would be deprived of in Europe, which is to increase its dominions in the three other parts of the world, by assisting it to obtain, and by declaring it the sole proprietor, both of what we do know, and what we may hereafter discover in those parts. We may suppose that on this occasion it would not have been necessary to use force to bring this house to concur in such a design; and, indeed, even on this supposition, it was not the prince of this house reigning in Spain to whom these parts of the world were to be subjected, but to different princes of the same, or of different branches, who, in acknowledgment of their possessions, should only have rendered homage to the crown of Spain, or, at most, a tribute, as due to the original conquerors. This house, which is so very desirous of being the most powerful in the world, might hereby have continued to flatter itself with so pleasing a pre-eminence, without the other powers being endangered by its pretended grandeur.

The steps taken by the house of Austria to arrive at universal monarchy, which evidently appears from the whole conduct of Charles V. and his son, have rendered this severity as just as it is necessary; and I will venture to say that this house would not have had any reasonable cause to complain of it. It is true it would be deprived of the empire; but when impartially considered, it will appear that all the other princes of Germany, and even of Europe, have an equal right to it. Were it necessary to prove this, we need only recollect on what conditions Charles V. himself, the most powerful of them all, was acknowledged emperor; conditions which, at Smalcalde, he solemnly swore to observe, in presence of seven princes or electors, and

the deputies of twenty-four Protestant towns; the Landgrave of Hesse and the Prince of Anhalt being speakers for all of them. He swore, I say, never to act contrary to the established laws of the empire, particularly the famous golden bull obtained under Charles IV., unless it were to amplify them, and even that only with the express consent and advice of the sovereign princes of Germany; not to infringe nor deprive them of any of their privileges; not to introduce foreigners into their council; not to make either war or peace without their consent; not to bestow honours and employments but on natives of Germany; not to use any other but the German language in all writings; not to levy any taxes by his own authority, nor apply any conquests which might be made to his own particular profit. He, in particular, formally renounced all pretensions to hereditary right in his house to the imperial dignity; and, according to the second article of the golden bull, he swore never in his lifetime to recognise a king of the Romans. When the Protestants of Germany, after they had in a manner driven Ferdinand out of it, consented that the imperial crown should be placed on his head, they were careful to make him renew his engagements in regard to all these articles, and to all these new regulations relative to the free exercise of their religion.

As to the possessions of the house of Austria in Germany, Italy, and the Low Countries, of which it was to be deprived, not to mention here how much it is indebted for them to a tyrannical usurpation, it would, after all, be only depriving it of territories which it keeps at so prodigious an expense (I speak in particular of Italy and the Low Countries), as all its treasures of the Indies have not been able to defray: and besides, by investing it with the

exclusive privilege above mentioned, of gaining new establishments, and appropriating to its own use the mines and treasures of the three other parts of the world, it would be abundantly indemnified; for these new acquisitions would be at least as considerable, and undoubtedly far more rich, than those. But what is here proposed must not be understood as if the other nations of Europe were excluded from all commerce to those countries; on the contrary, it should be free and open to every one, and the house of Austria, instead of considering this stipulation, which is of the greatest consequence, as an infringement of its privileges, would rather have reason to regard it as a further advantage.

From a further examination and consideration of these dispositions, I do not doubt but the house of Austria would have accepted the proposed conditions without being forced to it. But, supposing the contrary, what would a resistance have signified? The promise made to all the princes of Europe, of enriching themselves by the territories of which this house was to be divested, would deprive it of all hopes of assistance from any of them.

Upon the whole, then, it appears that all parties would have been gainers by it, and this was what assured Henry the Great of the success of his design: the empire would again become a dignity to which all princes, but particularly those of Germany, might aspire: and this dignity would be so much the more desirable, though, according to its original institution, no revenues would be annexed to it, as the emperor would be declared the first and chief magistrate of the whole Christian republic; and as we may suppose this honour would afterwards be conferred only on the most worthy, all his privileges in this respect, instead of being diminished, would be enlarged, his authority over



the Belgic and Helvetic republics would be more considerable, and upon every new election they would be obliged to render him a respectful homage. The electors would still continue to enjoy the right of electing the emperor, as well as of nominating the King of the Romans, with this restriction only, — that the election should not be made twice successively out of the same family. The first to have been elected in this manner was the Elector of Bavaria, who was also, in consequence of the partition, to have had those territories possessed by the house of Austria which joined to his own on the side of Italy.

The rest of these territories were to have been divided and equally distributed by the Kings of France, England, Denmark, and Sweden, among the Venetians, the Grisons, the Duke of Würtemberg, and the Marquis of Baden, Anspach, and Dourlach. Bohemia was to have been constituted an elective kingdom, by annexing it to Moravia, Silesia, and Lusatia. Hungary was also to have been an elective kingdom, and the pope, the Emperor, the Kings of France, England, Denmark, Sweden, and Lombardy, were to have had the right of nomination to it; and because this kingdom may be considered as the barrier of Christendom against the infidels, it was to have been rendered the most powerful and able to resist them; and this was to have been done by immediately adding to it the Archduchy of Austria, Styria, Carinthia, and Carniola, and by afterwards incorporating with it whatever might be acquired in Transylvania, Bosnia, Sclavonia, and Croatia. The same electors were to have obliged themselves, by oath, to assist it upon all occasions; and they were to have been particularly careful never to grant their suffrages from partiality, artifice, or intrigue, but always to confer the dignity on a prince who, by his

great qualifications, particularly for war, should be generally acknowledged as most proper. Poland being, from its nearness to Turkey, Muscovy, and Tartary, in the same situation with Hungary, was also to have been an elective kingdom, by the same eight potentates, and its power was to have been augmented, by annexing to it whatever should be conquered from the infidels adjoining to its own frontiers, and by determining in its favour those disputes which it had with all its other neighbours. Switzerland, when augmented by Franche-Comté, Alsace, the Tyrol, and other territories, was to have been united into a sovereign republic, governed by a council or senate, of which the emperor, the princes of Germany, and the Venetians were to have been umpires.

The changes to be made in Italy were, that the pope should be declared a secular prince, and bear rank among the monarchs of Europe, and under this title should possess Naples, Apulia, Calabria, and all their dependencies, which should be indissolubly united to St. Peter's patrimony; but in case the holy father had opposed this, which, indeed, could scarcely have been supposed, the disposition must then have been changed, and the kingdom of Naples would have been divided and disposed of as the electoral kings should have determined. Sicily was to have been ceded to the republic of Venice, by letters from the same eight principal potentates, upon condition that it should render homage for it to every pope who should bear the title of Immediate Chief of the whole Italian Republic, otherwise, for this reason, called The Republic of the Church. The other members of this republic were to have been Genoa, Florence, Mantua, Modena, Parma, and Lucca, without any alterations in their government; Bologna and



Ferrara were to have been made free cities; and all these governments were every twenty years to have rendered homage to the pope their chief, by the gift of a crucifix of the value of ten thousand crowns.

Of the three great republics of Europe it appears, upon the first glance, that this would have been the most brilliant and the richest. Nevertheless, it would not have been so, for what belonged to the Duke of Savoy was not comprised herein. His territories were to have been constituted one of the great monarchies of Europe, hereditary to males and females, and to have borne the title of the kingdom of Lombardy, wherein, beside the territory so called, the Milanese and Montferrat would also have been comprised; and the Duke of Mantua, in exchange for these, was to have the Duchy of Cremona. An authentic testimony of the institution would have been given by the pope, the emperor, and the other sovereigns of the Christian republic.

Among all these different dismemberings we may observe that France received nothing for itself but the glory of distributing them with equity. Henry had declared this to be his intention long before. He even sometimes said, with equal moderation and good sense, that were these dispositions once firmly established, he would have voluntarily consented to have the extent of France determined by a majority of suffrages.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, as the districts of Artois, Hainault, Cambray, Cambresis, Tournay, Namur, and Luxembourg might more suitably be annexed to

<sup>1</sup> What then does Siri mean when he entertains us with the design which he falsely affirms Henry the Great had to join Lorraine to France (tom. i. p. 555), and to get Savoy ceded to him (tom. ii. p. 61)? What he says of the dispositions in regard to the pope and the Venetians, &c. (tom. ii. p. 180), is equally false. This writer seems indeed to have been in the pay of the house of Austria.

France than to any other nation, they were to have been ceded to Henry, but to have been divided into ten distinct governments, and bestowed on so many French princes or lords, all of them bearing rank as sovereigns.

In regard to England it was precisely the same: this was a determined point between Elizabeth and Henry, the two princes who were authors of the scheme, probably from an observation made by this queen, that the Britannic Isles, in all the different states through which they had passed, whether under one or several monarchs, elective or hereditary, as well in the male as female line, and in all the variations of their laws and policy, had never experienced any great disappointments or misfortunes but when their sovereigns had meddled in affairs out of their little continent. It seems, indeed, as if they were concentrated in it even by nature, and their happiness appears to depend entirely on themselves, without having any concerns with their neighbours, provided that they seek only to maintain peace in the three nations subject to them, by governing each according to its own laws and customs. To render everything equal between France and England, Brabant from the Duchy of Limbourg, the jurisdiction of Malines, and the other dependencies on Flemish Flanders, Gallican or imperial, were to have been formed into eight sovereign fiefs, to be given to so many princes or lords of this nation.

These two parts excepted, all the rest of the seventeen United Provinces, whether belonging to Spain or not, were to have been erected into a free and independent state, under the title of the Belgic republic, though there was one other fief to be formed from them, bearing the title of a principality, to be granted to the Prince of Orange; also some other inconsiderable indemnities for three or four

other persons. The succession of Cleves was to have been divided among those princes whom the emperor would have deprived of it, as the means of gratifying them at the expense of the house of Austria, as well as some other princes of the same district, to whom the imperial towns situated therein would have been granted. Even Sweden and Denmark, though they were to be considered as under the influence of the same law which England and France had imposed on themselves, would, by this distribution, have enlarged their territories, and acquired other considerable advantages. An end would have been put to the perpetual troubles which agitated these two kingdoms; and this, I think, would have been rendering them no inconsiderable service. All these cessions, exchanges, and transpositions towards the north of Germany were to have been determined by the Kings of France, England, and Lombardy, and the republic of Venice.

And now, perhaps, the purport of the design may be perceived, which was to divide Europe equally among a certain number of powers, in such a manner that none of them might have cause either of envy or fear from the possessions or power of the others. The number of them was reduced to fifteen, and they were of three kinds: six great hereditary monarchies, five elective monarchies, and four sovereign republics. The six hereditary monarchies were France, Spain, England or Britain, Denmark, Sweden, and Lombardy; the five elective monarchies were the Empire, the Papacy or Pontificate, Poland, Hungary, and Bohemia; the four republics were the Venetian, the Italian — or what, from its dukes, may be called the Ducal — the Swiss, Helvetic, or Confederate, and the Belgic, or Provincial republic.

The laws and ordinances proper to cement a union between all these princes, and to maintain that harmony which should be once established among them, the reciprocal oaths and engagements in regard both to religion and policy, the mutual assurances in respect to the freedom of commerce, and the measures to be taken to make all these partitions with equity and to the general content and satisfaction of the parties; all these matters are to be understood, nor is it necessary to say anything of the precaution taken by Henry in regard to them. The most that could have happened would have been some trifling difficulties, which would easily have been obviated in the general council, representing all the states of Europe, the establishment of which was certainly the happiest invention that could have been conceived to prevent those innovations which time often introduces in the wisest and most useful institutions.

The model of this general council of Europe had been formed on that of the ancient Amphyctions of Greece, with such alterations only as rendered it suitable to our customs, climate, and policy. It consisted of a certain number of commissioners, ministers, or plenipotentiaries from all the governments of the Christian republic, who were to be constantly assembled as a senate, to deliberate on any affairs which might occur, to discuss the different interests, pacify the quarrels, clear up and determine all the civil, political, and religious affairs of Europe, whether within itself or with its neighbours. The form and manner of proceeding in the senate would have been more particularly determined by the suffrages of the senate itself. Henry was of opinion that it should be composed of four commissioners from each of the following potentates: the Emperor, the Pope, the Kings of France, Spain, England,

Denmark, Sweden, Lombardy, Poland, and the republic of Venice ; and of two only from the other republics and inferior powers, which altogether would have composed a senate of about sixty-six persons, who should have been re-chosen every three years.

In regard to the place of meeting, it remained to be determined whether it would be better for the council to be fixed or ambulatory, divided into three, or united in one. If it were divided into three, each containing twenty-two magistrates, then each of them must have been fixed in such a centre as should appear to be most commodious, as Paris or Bourges for one, and somewhere about Trente and Cracovia for the two others. If it were judged more expedient not to divide their assembly, whether fixed or ambulatory, it must have been nearly in the centre of Europe, and would consequently have been fixed in some one of the fourteen cities following : Metz, Luxembourg, Nancy, Cologne, Mayence, Treves, Frankfort, Wirtzburg, Heidelberg, Spire, Worms, Strasbourg, Basle, or Besançon.

Besides this general council it would, perhaps, have been proper to have constituted some others of an inferior degree, for the particular convenience of different districts. For example, were six such created, they might have been placed at Dantzic, Nuremberg, Vienna, Bologna, Constance, and the last wherever it should be judged most convenient for the kingdoms of France, Spain, England, and the Belgic republic. But whatever the number or form of these particular councils might have been, it would have been absolutely necessary that they should be subordinate, and recur, by appeal, to the great general council, whose decisions, when considered as proceeding from the united authority of all the sovereigns, pronounced in a manner

equally free and absolute, must have been regarded as so many final and irrevocable decrees.

But let us quit these speculative designs, in which practice and experience would, perhaps, have caused many alterations ; and let us come to the means actually employed by Henry to facilitate the execution of his great design.

To gain one of the most powerful princes of Europe, with whom to concert all his designs, was what Henry always considered as of the utmost consequence : and this was the reason that after the death of Elizabeth, who had indissolubly united the interests of the two crowns of France and England, every means was used which might inspire her successor, King James, with all her sentiments. Had I but succeeded in the solemn embassy, the particulars of which I have related already, so far as to have gained this prince's consent to have his name appear openly with Henry's, this military confederacy, especially if it had, in like manner, been strengthened with the names of the Kings of Denmark and Sweden, would have prevented the troubles and difficulties of many negotiations ; but nothing further could be obtained of the King of England than the same promises which were required of the other courts, namely, that he would not only not oppose the confederacy, but, when Henry had made his designs public, would declare himself in his favour, and contribute towards it in the same manner as the other powers interested therein. A means was, indeed, afterwards found to obtain the execution of this promise, in a manner so much the more easy as it did not disturb the natural indolence of this prince ; and this was by getting what he hesitated to undertake in his own name executed by his son, the Prince of Wales, who, as soon as he had obtained his



father's promise that he would at least not obstruct his proceedings, anticipated Henry's utmost wishes, being animated with a thirst of glory and desire to render himself worthy the esteem and alliance of Henry, for he was to marry the eldest of the daughters of France. He wrote me several letters upon this subject, and expressed himself in the manner I have mentioned. He also further said that the King of France might depend upon having six thousand foot and fifteen hundred horse, which he would oblige himself to bring into his service whenever they should be required : and this number was afterwards augmented by two thousand more foot and eight cannons, maintained in all respects at the expense of England for three years at least. The King of Sweden did not show himself less zealous for the common cause ; and the King of Denmark also appeared to be equally well disposed in its favour.

In the mean time we were indefatigable in our negotiations in the different courts of Europe, particularly in the circles of Germany and the United Provinces, where the king for this purpose had sent Boissise, Fresne-Canaye, Baugy, Ancel, and Bongars. The council of the States were very soon unanimous in their determinations ; the Prince of Orange sent the Sieurs Malderet and Brederode from them to offer the king fifteen thousand foot and three thousand horse. They were soon followed by the Landgrave of Hesse, and the Prince of Anhalt, to whom, as well as to the Prince of Orange, the confederacy was obliged for being increased by the Duke of Savoy ; by all the Reformed religion in Hungary, Bohemia, and Lower Austria ; by many Protestant princes and towns in Germany ; in fine, by all the Swiss cantons of this religion.



And when the succession of Cleves, which the emperor showed himself disposed to usurp, became another incentive to the confederacy, there was then scarcely any part of Germany that was not for us ; which evidently appeared from the result of the general assembly at Hall. The Elector of Saxony, who perhaps remained alone of the opposite party, might have been embarrassed in an affair out of which he would probably have found it difficult to extricate himself ; and this was to have been done by suggesting to him the branch of John Frederic, deprived of this electorate by Charles V.

There were several of these powers in regard to whom I am persuaded nothing would have been risked by disclosing to them the whole intent and scope of the design. On the contrary, they would probably have seconded it with the greater ardour when they found the destruction of the Austrian grandeur was a determined point. These powers were, more particularly, the Venetians, the United Provinces, almost all the Protestants, and especially the Evangelics of Germany. But as too many precautions could not be taken to prevent the Catholic powers from being prejudiced against the new alliance in which they were to be engaged, a too hasty discovery either of the true motives, or the whole intent of the design, was, therefore, cautiously avoided. It was at first concealed from all without exception, and afterwards revealed but to few persons of approved discretion, and those only such as were absolutely necessary to engage others to join the confederacy. The association was for a long time spoken of to others only as a kind of general treaty of peace, wherein such methods would be projected as the public benefit and the general service of Europe might suggest as necessary

to stop the progress of the excessive powers of the house of Austria. Our ambassadors and agents had orders only to demand of these princes a renewal or commencement of alliance, in order more effectually to succeed in the projected peace ; to consult with them upon the means whereby to effect it ; to appear as if they were sent only in conjunction with them to endeavour the discovery of these means ; but yet to second them, and according to the disposition in which they were, to insinuate, as if by accidental conjecture, some notion of a new method more proper to maintain the equilibrium of Europe, and to secure to each religion a more undisturbed repose than they had hitherto enjoyed. The proposals made to the Kings of England and Sweden, and the Dukes of Savoy and Lorraine, for alliances by marriage, proved very successful ; it was absolutely determined that the Dauphin should espouse the heiress of Lorraine, which duchy still continued, as before, to depend on the empire.

But no precaution appeared so necessary, nor was more strongly recommended to our negotiators, than to convince all the princes of Europe of the disinterestedness with which Henry was resolved to act on this occasion. This point was indefatigably laboured, and they were convinced of it, when, on the supposition that it would be necessary to have recourse to arms, we strongly protested that the forces, the treasures, and even the person of Henry might be depended on ; and this in a manner so generous on his side, that, instead of expecting to be rewarded, or even indemnified for them, he was voluntarily inclined to give the most positive assurances not to reserve to himself a single town, nor the smallest district. This moderation, of which at last no one doubted, made a suitable

impression, especially when it was perceived to be so much the more generous, as there was sufficient to excite and satisfy the desires of all. And in the interim, before the solemn publication of this absolute renunciation, which was to have been made in the manifestoes that were preparing, Henry gave a proof of it, that was an absolute demonstration, to the pope.

No one being ignorant that it was at least intended to deprive Spain of those of its usurpations which were the most manifestly unjust, Navarre and Roussillon would infallibly revert to France; the king, therefore, voluntarily offered to exchange them for the two kingdoms of Naples and Sicily; and at the same time to make a present of both to the pope and the republic of Venice. This, certainly, was renouncing the most incontestable right he could have to any of the territories of which this crown was to be deprived; and by submitting this affair as he did to the determination of the pope and the Venetians, he the more sensibly obliged them, as both the honour and profit which might arise therefrom would be in their favour. The pope, therefore, on the first proposition made to him, even anticipated Henry's intentions; he immediately demanded, whether, as affairs were then situated, the several powers would approve his taking upon him the office of common mediator, to establish peace in Europe, and convert the continual wars among its several princes into a perpetual war against the Infidels, which was a part of the design he had been very careful to acquaint him with; and the pope sufficiently showed that he was desirous nothing should be done without his participation, and that he was still less disposed to refuse the advantage offered to him.

Paul V., when a favourable opportunity offered, explained himself more openly on this head. Ubaldini, his nuncio, told the king, that his holiness for the confederacy against the house of Austria, would, on various pretences, engage to raise ten thousand foot, fifteen hundred horse, and ten cannons, provided his majesty would promise to defray the necessary expenses of their subsistence for three years; would give all possible security for the cession of Naples and the other rights of homage according to promise; and would sincerely consent to the other condition in regard to the treaty which he should think necessary to impose. These conditions, at least the principal of them, were, that only Catholics should be elected emperors; that the Roman religion should be maintained in all its rights, and the ecclesiastics in all their privileges and immunities; and the Protestants should not be permitted to establish themselves in places where they were not established before the treaty. The king promised Ubaldini that he would religiously observe all these conditions; and further, he relinquished to the pope the honour of being the arbitrator of all those regulations to be made in the establishment of the new republic.

The removing of these difficulties in regard to the pope was of no inconsiderable consequence; for his example would not fail to be of great force in determining the other Catholic powers, especially those of Italy. Nothing was neglected which might promote the favourable dispositions in which they appeared to be, by punctually paying the cardinals and petty princes of Italy their pensions, and even by adding to them several other gratuities. The establishment of a new monarchy in Italy was the only pretence these petty courts had for not joining the

confederacy ; but this vain apprehension would be easily dissipated. The particular advantages which each would acquire, might alone have satisfied them in this respect ; but if not, all opposers might have been threatened with being declared after a certain time divested of all right to the proposed advantages, and even of all pretensions to the empire, or the elective kingdoms ; and that the republics amongst them should be converted into sovereignties, and sovereignties into republics. There is but little probability that any of them would even have hesitated what to do. The punishment of the first offender would have compelled the submission of all these petty states, who were besides sufficiently sensible of their impotence. But this method was not to be used but on failure of all others ; and even then, no opportunity would have been neglected of showing them favour.

And now we are arrived at the point to which everything was advanced at the fatal moment of the death of Henry the Great ; and the following is a circumstantial detail of the forces for the war which all the parties concerned had, in conjunction with him, agreed to furnish : The contingents of the Kings of England, Sweden, and Denmark were each eight thousand foot, fifteen hundred horse, and eight cannons, to be raised and maintained in all respects at their expense at least for three years ; and this expense, reckoning ten livres a month for each foot soldier, thirty livres for each trooper, the pay of the officers included, and the year to be composed of ten months, would amount for each of these states to three million three hundred and seventy thousand livres for three years ; the expense of the artillery, fifteen hundred livres a month for each piece being also included. The princes of

Germany before mentioned were to furnish twenty-five thousand foot, ten thousand horse, and forty cannons ; they had themselves computed the expense at nine or ten millions for three years. The United Provinces, twelve thousand foot, two thousand horse, and ten cannons ; the expense twelve millions. Hungary, Bohemia, and the other Evangelics of Germany, the same number, and nearly at the same expense. The pope, ten thousand foot, fifteen hundred horse, and eight cannons. The Duke of Savoy, eighteen thousand foot, two thousand horse and twelve cannons. The Venetians, twelve thousand foot, two thousand horse, and twelve cannons. The expense of these last-mentioned armaments the king himself had engaged to defray. The total of all these foreign forces, allowing for deficiencies, which might probably have happened, would always have been at least one hundred thousand foot, from twenty to twenty-five thousand horse, and about one hundred and twenty cannons.

The king on his side had actually on foot two good and well furnished armies ; the first, which he was to have commanded in person, consisted of twenty thousand foot, all native French, eight thousand Switzers, four thousand lansquenets, or Walloons, five thousand horse, and twenty cannons. The second, to be commanded by Lesdiguières, in the neighbourhood of the Alps, consisted of ten thousand foot, one thousand horse, and ten cannons ; besides a flying camp of four thousand foot, six hundred horse, and ten cannons ; and a reserve of two thousand foot, to garrison those places where they might be necessary.<sup>1</sup> We will here make a general calculation of all these troops.

<sup>1</sup> There are some variations in our Memoirs in regard to the number of men, both in the royal grand army, which, in different places, is said to be composed of thirty, thirty-two, and thirty-six thousand foot, of four, five, six, and eight thousand horse, and from thirty to fifty cannons ; and



The twenty thousand foot, at twenty-one livres a month to each man, including the appointments of generals and officers, would by the month require four hundred and twenty thousand livres, and by the year five million and forty thousand livres; the eight thousand Switzers and four thousand lansquenets, three millions; the five thousand horse, at sixty livres a month to each, by the month, would require two hundred and forty thousand livres, and by the year, two million eight hundred and forty thousand livres; this computation is made so high as sixty livres a month to each, because the pay of the officers, and particularly of the king's white troops, composed of a thousand men of the first rank in the kingdom, who served as volunteers, was therein included. The expense of the twenty large cannons, six culverins, and four demi-culverins, supposing all necessary furniture for them provided, would amount to three thousand six hundred livres a month for each piece; the thirty together would consequently require one hundred and eight thousand livres. Extraordinary expenses and losses in regard to the provisions and ammunition for this army might be computed at one hundred and fifty thousand livres.

Next, for expenses, whether ordinary or extraordinary, in spies, for the sick and wounded, and other unforeseen contingencies, computing at the highest a like sum of one million eight hundred thousand livres. To supply the deficiencies which might happen in the armies of the confederate princes, to pay the pensions, and to answer other

in that of the confederate princes of Germany, sometimes computed even at forty thousand foot, and twelve thousand horse; similar differences often occur in regard to those of Italy, and the other confederate princes; neither are the calculations of the expense always the same, nor quite just in their estimates.



particular exigencies which might arise in the kingdom, three hundred thousand livres a month ; for the year, three million six hundred thousand livres. The army of Lesdiguières would require three millions a year, and as much for each of the armies of the pope, the Venetians, and the Duke of Savoy. These last four articles together make twelve millions a year, which, added to the preceding sums, amount in the whole to about thirty million one hundred and sixty thousand livres a year.

It remains only to triple this total for the three years during which it was supposed there might be occasion for the forces, and the whole amount will appear to be between ninety and ninety-one millions, which might nearly be necessary to defray the expenses of the intended war ; I say nearly, for in this calculation I have not included the flying camp, nor the two thousand men for garrisons : the first of these two articles, at the rate of eighteen livres a month to each foot soldier, and fifty livres to each trooper, would require a further sum of about one hundred and thirty thousand livres a month, which, for a year, would be one million five hundred thousand livres, and four million five hundred thousand livres for three years ; the second article, for the three years, would require about twelve hundred thousand livres.

On a supposition that the expense of France on this occasion would not have amounted to more than between ninety and ninety-five millions, which supposition is far from being hazardous, because we have here computed everything at the highest it would bear, it is easy to show that, at the expiration of the three years, Henry would have remaining in his coffers thirty millions, over and above what would be expended. The total amount of all

the receipts from the several funds, formed and to be formed for these three years, being one hundred and twenty-one million five hundred and forty thousand livres, as appears from the three estimates which I drew up and presented to his majesty.

The first of these estimates, which contained only a list of the sums actually deposited in the Bastille, amounted to twenty-two million four hundred and sixty thousand livres, in several coffers, marked Phelipeaux, Puget, and Bouhier; the second was another list of the sums actually due from the farmers, partisans, and receivers-general, which might be considered as in possession, and produced another total of eighteen million six hundred and thirteen thousand livres; these two totals together made forty-one million seventy-three thousand livres, which the king would immediately have at his disposal. To acquire the rest of these hundred and twenty-one millions, I had recourse, in the third estimate, to no new taxations: the whole remainder would arise solely from the offers of augmentation upon the several royal revenues which the farmers and partisans had made for a lease of three years, and from what the officers of justice and the finances had voluntarily engaged to furnish, provided they might be permitted the free enjoyment of certain privileges; so that in these one hundred and twenty-one millions I had not comprehended the three years' receipts of the other royal revenues. And in case it were afterwards necessary to have recourse to means somewhat more burdensome, I had given the king another estimate, whereby, instead of these one hundred and twenty-one millions, it appeared that one hundred and seventy-five millions might have been raised. I also demonstrated that, upon any pressing emergency,

this kingdom could open itself resources of treasure that are almost innumerable.

It was very much to be wished that the sums of money and the numbers of men to be furnished by the other confederates would be equally well secured by such estimates ; but whatever deficiencies might have happened, having forty-one millions to distribute wherever it might be found necessary, what obstacles could Henry have to fear from a power who was known to be destitute of money, and even of troops ? no one being ignorant that the best and most numerous forces which Spain had in its service were drawn from Sicily, Naples, and Lombardy, or else were Germans, Switzers, and Walloons.

Everything, therefore, concurring to promote success, and good magazines being placed in proper parts of the passage, the king was on the point of marching, at the head of his army, directly to Mézières, from whence, taking his route by Clinchamp, Orchimont, Beaumont, Offais, Longpré, &c., after having caused five forts to be erected in these quarters, and therein placed his two thousand men destined for that purpose, with the necessary provisions and ammunition, he would, near Duren and Stavelo, have joined the two armies which the princes of Germany and the United Provinces would have caused to march thither ; and then, beginning by occupying all those passages through which the enemy might find entrance into the territories of Juliers and Cleves, these principalities, which were a pretext for the armament, would consequently have immediately submitted to him, and would have been sequestered, till it should appear how the emperor and the King of Spain would act, in regard to the designs of the confederate princes.

✓ This was the moment fixed on to publish and make known throughout Europe the declarations, in form of manifestoes, which were to open the eyes of all in regard to their true interests, and the real motives which had caused Henry and the confederate princes thus to take up arms. These manifestoes were composed with the greatest care; a spirit of justice, honesty, and good faith, of disinterestedness and good policy, were everywhere apparent in them; and, without wholly discovering the several changes intended to be made in Europe, it was intimated that their common interest had thus compelled its princes to arm themselves, and not only to prevent the house of Austria from getting possession of Cleves, but also to divest her of the United Provinces, and of whatever else she unjustly possessed; that their intentions were to distribute these territories among such princes and states as were the weakest; that the design was such as could not surely give occasion to a war in Europe; that, though armed, the kings of France and the North rather chose to be mediators in the causes of complaint which Europe, through them, made against the house of Austria, and only sought to determine amicably all differences subsisting among the several princes; and that, whatever was done on this occasion, should be not only with the unanimous consent of all these powers, but even of all their people, who were hereby invited to give in their opinions to the confederate princes: such also would have been the substance of the circular letters which Henry and the associated princes would at the same time have sent to all places subject to them; that so, the people being informed, and joining their suffrages, a universal cry from all parts of Christendom would have been raised against the house of Austria.

As it was determined to avoid with the utmost caution whatever might give umbrage to any one, and Henry being desirous to give still more convincing proofs to his confederates that to promote their true interests was his sole study and design, to the letters already mentioned he would have added others to be written to different courts, particularly to the electors of Cologne and Treves, the Bishops of Munster, Liege, and Paderborn, and the Duke and Duchess of Lorraine ; and this conduct would have been pursued, in regard even to our enemies, in the letters which were to be written to the archduke, and the infanta his wife, to the emperor himself, and to all the Austrian princes, requesting them, from the strongest and most pressing motives, to embrace the only right and reasonable party ; in all places, nothing would have been neglected to instruct, convince, and gain confidence ; the execution of all engagements, and the distribution or sequestration of whatever territories might require to be so disposed, would have been strictly, and even scrupulously observed ; force would never have been employed till arguments, entreaties, embassies and negotiations should have failed : finally, even in the use of arms, it would have been not as enemies, but pacifiers ; the queen would have advanced as far as Metz, accompanied by the whole court, and attended by such pomp and equipage as were suitable only to peace.

Henry had projected a new method of discipline in his camp, which very probably would have produced the good effects intended by it, especially if his example had been imitated by the other princes his allies. He intended to have created four marshals of France, or at least four camp marshals, whose sole care should have been to maintain universal order, discipline, and subordination. The

first of these would have had the inspection of the cavalry, the second of the French infantry, the third of the foreign forces, and the fourth of whatever concerned the artillery, ammunition, and provisions ; and the king would have required an exact and regular account from these four officers of whatever was transacted by them in their respective divisions. He applied himself with equal ardor to cause all military virtues to be revered and honoured in his army, by granting all employs and places of trust to merit only, by preferring good officers, by rewarding the soldiers, by punishing blasphemies and other impious language, by showing a regard both for his own troops and those of his confederates, by stifling a spirit of discord, caused by a difference of religion ; and, finally, by uniting emulation with that harmony of sentiments which contributes more than all the rest to obtain victory.

The consequence of this enterprise, with regard to war, would have depended on the manner in which the emperor and the King of Spain should receive the propositions and reply to the manifestoes of the confederate princes ; it seems probable that the emperor, submitting to force, would have consented to everything. I am even persuaded he would have been the first to demand an amicable interview with the King of France, that he might at least extricate himself with honour from the difficulties in which he would have been involved ; and he would probably have been satisfied with assurances that the imperial dignity, with all its rights and prerogatives, should be secured to him for his life. The archdukes had made great advances ; they engaged to permit the king, with all his troops, to enter their territories and towns, provided they committed no hostilities in them, and paid



punctually, in all places, for whatever they required. If these appearances were not deceitful, Spain, being abandoned by all, must, though unwillingly, have submitted to the will of its conquerors.

But it may be supposed that all the branches of the house of Austria would, on this occasion, have united, and, in defence of their common interests, would have used all the efforts of which they were capable. In this case, Henry and the confederate princes, by declaring war in form against their enemies, and depriving the Spaniards of all communications, especially with the Low Countries, and having, as we have said, united all their forces, given audience to the princes of Germany, promised assistance to the people of Hungary and Bohemia who should come to implore it of them, and finally secured the territory of Cleves, — these princes, I say, would then have caused their three armies to advance towards Basle and Strasbourg to support the Switzers, who, after having, for form's sake, asked leave of the emperor, would have declared for the union. The United Provinces, though at a considerable distance from these armies, would yet have been sufficiently defended by the flying camp, which Henry would have caused to advance towards them; by the arms of England and the North, to whose protection they would be entrusted; by the care which at first would have been taken to get possession of Charlemont, Maestricht, Namur, and other places near the Meuse, and finally by the naval forces of these provinces, which, in conjunction with those of England, would have reigned absolute masters at sea.

These measures being taken, the war could have been waged only in Italy or Germany; and supposing it to have



been in the former, the three armies of Henry, the Prince of Orange, and the Princes of Germany, quitting Franche-Comté, after having fortified it in the same manner as the Low Countries, by a small body of troops, would have marched with their forces towards the Alps, where they would have been joined by those of Lesdiguières, the pope, the Venetians, and the Duke of Savoy, who then would have declared themselves openly, — the Duke of Savoy, by requiring a portion for his duchess, equal to what had been given to the Infanta Isabella, and the other powers by demanding the execution of the agreement in regard to Navarre, Naples, and Sicily, and thus, from all parts of Europe, war would be declared against Spain. If the enemy should appear inclined to draw the war into Germany, then the confederates, having left a considerable number of troops in Italy, would have penetrated even into the heart of Germany, where, from Hungary and Bohemia, they would have been strengthened by those powerful succours which were there preparing.

The other events, in consequence of these dispositions, can only be conjectured, because they would greatly depend on the degree of alacrity with which the enemy should oppose the rapidity of our conquests, and on the readiness with which the confederates, especially those at the extremity of Germany, should make good their engagements. Nevertheless, I am persuaded, that from the dispositions, as here laid down, there are none but must regard the house of Austria as struck by the blow whose force was for ever to annihilate its power, and open a passage to the execution of the other projected designs, to which this attack could only be considered as the preliminary. I will add, too (and here the voice of all Europe

will vindicate me from the imputation of partiality), that if the force necessary to render such an enterprise successful does always depend on the person of the chief who conducts it, this could not have been better conferred than upon Henry the Great. With a valour alone capable of surmounting the greatest difficulties, and a presence of mind which neither neglected nor lost any opportunities of advantage ; with a prudence which, without precipitating anything, or attempting too many things at a time, could regularly connect them together, and perfectly knew what might and what might not be the result of time ; with a consummate experience ; and, finally, with all those other great qualifications, whether as a warrior or politician, which were so remarkable in this prince, — what is there which might not have been obtained ? This was the meaning of that modest device which this great king caused to be inscribed on some of the last medals that were struck under his reign : *Nil sine concilio*.

PASSAGES FROM SULLY'S MEMOIRS ILLUSTRATING THE HISTORY OF THE GREAT DESIGN

I

CONFERENCE BETWEEN SULLY AND QUEEN ELIZABETH,  
AT DOVER, IN 1601<sup>1</sup>

The Queen of England hearing the king was at Calais, thought it a favourable opportunity to satisfy her impatience of seeing and embracing her best friend. Henry was not less desirous of this interview, that he might confer with the queen upon the affairs of Europe in general, as well as on their own in particular, especially those which had been hinted to him by the English and Dutch ambassadors when he was at Nantes. Elizabeth first wrote him a letter equally polite and full of offers of service ; she afterwards made him the usual compliments, and repeated those assurances by the Lord Edmond,<sup>2</sup> whom she despatched to Calais, till she herself could arrive at Dover, from whence she sent M. de Stafford Lord Sidney,<sup>3</sup> with other letters.

<sup>1</sup> From the Twelfth Book of Sully's Memoirs.

<sup>2</sup> He means Sir Thomas Edmondes. (See Birch's Negotiations, p. 200; Camden, &c.) — ED.

<sup>3</sup> The person here styled "Stafford Lord Sidney," was Sir Robert Sydney, the younger brother of the illustrious Sir Philip. He was not a peer till after the accession of James, who first created him Baron Sydney of Penshurst, next Viscount Lisle, and lastly Earl of Leicester. Why he is called Stafford in the text it is not easy to say, unless we could suppose the author has confounded him with Sir Edward Stafford, ambassador in France in 1588. — ED.

Henry resolving not to be outdone in complaisance, answered these advances in a manner that showed at once his respect for Elizabeth, and his esteem and admiration for her character. This intercourse continued a long time, to the great mortification of the Spaniards, whose jealousy was strongly excited by the proximity and close correspondence of the two sovereigns. Of all the letters written by them on this occasion, I possess only one of these which Elizabeth wrote to the king : this, because it was the occasion of the voyage I made to this princess, I have kept in my hands ; it was as follows :

“ My very dear and well-beloved Brother, — I had always considered the condition of sovereigns to be the most happy, and that they were the least subject to meet with obstacles in the way of their just and legitimate desires ; but our residence in two places so near each other makes me begin to think, that those of high as well as of middle rank often meet with thorns and difficulties, since from certain causes and considerations, rather to satisfy others than ourselves, we are both prevented from crossing the sea ; for I had promised myself the happiness of embracing you, as being your very loyal sister and faithful ally, and you my very dear brother whom I love and honour above everything in this world, whose incomparable virtues (to tell you my real sentiments) I admire, and particularly your valour in arms, and politeness and gallantry amongst the fair sex. I have something of consequence to communicate to you, which I can neither write nor confide to any of your ministers, nor my own at present, so that, in expectation of a more convenient opportunity, I shall return to London in a few days. That God may

continue to you, my very dear and well-beloved brother, his holy favours and blessing, is the prayer of your most affectionate sister and loyal ally — ELIZABETH.”<sup>1</sup>

When the king received this letter, he read it over two or three times with great satisfaction, and took particular notice of the latter part of it; but being at a loss how to interpret it, he sent Secretary Feret for me, and as soon as I went to him, he said to me, “I have just received a letter from my good sister the Queen of England, whom you esteem so highly, more full of cajoleries than ever; pray see if, from your knowledge of her character, you can comprehend better than I can what she means by the conclusion of this letter.” Having read it over several times,

<sup>1</sup> This letter, and this whole relation of the Duke of Sully’s concerning Henry the Fourth’s journey to Calais, and Elizabeth’s to Dover, appear sufficient, without any other reflections, to show the error of all those various judgments current at that time, and which have been mentioned by different historians concerning these two potentates. It was said Elizabeth proposed to Henry, either that he should come to Dover, or at least confer with her in a vessel half-way between these two towns, and that this proposal concealed a snare in which Elizabeth hoped to entrap Henry, by seizing upon his person in the interview, and keeping him prisoner till he restored Calais, and that Henry excused himself from complying with her request, only because he suspected the design; others say, because his fears of the sea were so great, that he durst not venture into a vessel. No one suspected the true motive for proposing this interview, which was the occasion of all those letters that passed between them, and caused the Duke of Sully to make the secret voyage to Dover, of which he here gives an account. Siri, on this occasion, builds up the resentment which he supposes Elizabeth always preserved, both at the peace of Vervins and the surrender of Calais, as well as her fear lest Henry should aggrandise himself too much, and on the jealousy which the English entertained of the French. (*Mem. Recond.* vol. i. pp. 130, 150, &c.) But this writer, so well acquainted with foreign negotiations, especially those of Italy and Spain, is not right, neither in the facts nor the opinions which he produces concerning the interior of our court and councils under the reign of Henry IV. He knew neither this prince nor the Duke of Sully.

but being obliged to confess I could not comprehend it, "Well, my friend," said his majesty, "I will not conceal from you that I am very anxious to know what this princess has in view by these expressions, for, in my opinion, she has not employed them without very particular reasons : I have therefore thought of an expedient by which, perhaps, we may come to a knowledge of her meaning, without doing anything that can give offence to either party ; this is, for you to set out to-morrow morning for Dover, as if by your own inclination, and on your arrival there, to make show of not wishing to stop, but of passing on to London, for the purpose of seeing the country ; so that, should you meet with any person of your acquaintance, the queen may be informed that you are in Dover to watch what she will do ; and should she send for you, it is probable you may discover some part of her sentiments in the course of your conversation together."

I accordingly embarked early next morning, in a small boat, with very few attendants, without mentioning my journey to any one, and reached Dover about ten o'clock, where I saw a great number of people, some embarking, others landing, and many walking upon the beach ; six or seven of the latter advanced towards me, one of whom was Lord Sidney, who, having five or six days before seen me at Calais, immediately recognised me, and ran to embrace me : with him were Cobham, Raleigh, and Griffin, and they were soon after joined by the Earls of Devonshire and Pembroke, who, after mutual civilities and compliments, asked me if I were come to see the queen on the part of my master. I told them I was not, and even assured them that the king knew nothing of my voyage ; I likewise entreated them not to mention it to the queen,



for not having had any intention of paying my respects to her, I had no letter to present, my desire being only to make a short tour *incognito* to London. These gentlemen replied, smiling, that I had taken a useless precaution, for that probably the guardship had already given a signal of my arrival, and that I might quickly expect to see a messenger from the queen, who would not suffer me to pass in this manner, she having but three days ago spoke of me publicly, and in very obliging terms. I affected to be extremely concerned at this unlucky accident, but to hope, nevertheless, that I might still pass undiscovered, provided that these gentlemen would be secret as to the place where I was to lodge; from whence, I assured them, I would immediately depart as soon as I had taken a little refreshment: saying this, I left them abruptly, and had but just entered my apartment, and spoke a few words to one of my secretaries, when I heard somebody behind me tell me that he arrested me as a prisoner to the queen. This was the captain of her majesty's guards, whom I embraced, and answered, smiling, that I should esteem such imprisonment a great honour. He had orders to conduct me directly to the queen; I therefore followed him. As soon as Elizabeth perceived me, she exclaimed, "Well! Monsieur de Rosny, and do you thus break our fences and pass on without coming to see me? I am greatly surprised at it, for I thought you bore me more affection than any of my own servants, and I am persuaded that I have given you no cause to change those sentiments." I replied, that her majesty had always so highly honoured me, and testified so much good-will towards me, that I loved and honoured her for her excellent virtues, and would always serve her most humbly, not merely from my own inclination, but also from

knowing that in doing so I was rendering an acceptable service to my king. After many more expressions of this sort, the queen replied, "Well, Monsieur de Rosny, to give you a proof that I believe all you have told me of the good-will of the king my brother, and of your own, I will speak with you on the subject of the last letter I wrote to him; though, perhaps, you have seen it, for Stafford<sup>1</sup> and Edmondes tell me that the king conceals few of his secrets from you." On telling her I was not ignorant of the letter, she immediately answered that she was glad of it, and also that I had crossed the sea, because she had no difficulty to tell me freely what she hinted at in the conclusion of her letter. She then drew me aside, and conversed with me a long time on the greater part of the events which had happened since the peace of Vervins (too long to be repeated here), and concluded with asking if her good brother the king's affairs were now in a better state than in 1598, and if he were in a condition to begin, in good earnest, the great design which she had proposed from that time? To this I replied, that, although since that period the king had had many weighty affairs to settle, as well in relation to the war in Savoy as to several plots in the heart of his kingdom, which were not yet entirely destroyed, all which had occasioned very heavy expenses, yet I had nevertheless so managed the revenue, and other departments of the state, that a numerous artillery had been provided, as well as abundance of stores and provisions, and even of money; but that all this, however, was not sufficient to advise him to bear alone the burthen of an open war against the whole house of Austria, which was so powerful, that it would be in vain to attack it partially;

<sup>1</sup> This must be a mistake for Sydney. (See note, p. 54.)

that it even appeared to me that the assistance of England and the States only was by no means sufficient for the commencement of so great a work, but that it was absolutely necessary to endeavour to form a coalition of all the other kings, princes, republics, and people, who dreaded the tyranny of that house, or would profit by its humiliation. The queen here told me she was very happy she had heard my sentiments on this subject, and the more so as she believed that I had not said so much without knowing something of the intentions of the king her brother, with which, in this case, hers would perfectly agree, by only adding certain conditions, which she considered as absolutely necessary to prevent misunderstanding and distrust among the coalesced powers ; these, in her opinion, would be, to proportion so well the desires of each, that none might be entertained either prejudicial or disagreeable to any of the rest, which would inevitably happen if the more powerful wished to take the greatest share of the conquests and the distribution of them ; and that above all things it was necessary that neither her brother the King of France, nor the King of Scotland, who would certainly inherit her crown, nor those of Denmark and Sweden, who might become very powerful both by land and sea, nor herself, consequently, should pretend to claim any portion of the seventeen provinces of the Low Countries, nor any place in their neighbourhood ; " For, to conceal nothing from you," continued the queen, " if my brother the King of France should think of making himself proprietor, or even only feudal-lord of the United Provinces, I should never consent to it, but entertain a most violent jealousy of him ; nor should I blame him if, giving him the same occasion, he should have the

same fears of me: and so of all the other states and dignities of which the ambitious house of Austria may be deprived."

These were not the only reflections made by the Queen of England; she said many other things, which appeared to me so just and sensible, that I was filled with astonishment and admiration. It is not unusual to behold princes form great designs; their sphere of action so forcibly inclines them to this, that it is only necessary to warn them of the extreme, which is, the projecting what their powers are so little proportioned to perform, that they scarce ever find themselves able to execute the half of what they purpose; but to be able to distinguish and form only such as are reasonable; wisely to regulate the conduct of them; to foresee and guard against all obstacles in such a manner that, when they happen, nothing more will be necessary than to apply the remedies prepared long before; this is what few princes are capable of. Ignorance, prosperity, luxury, vanity, nay, even fear and indolence, daily produce schemes, to execute which there is not the least possibility. Another cause of surprise to me was, that Elizabeth and Henry, having never conferred together on their political project, should agree so exactly in all their ideas as not to differ even in the most minute particulars.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> As Hume has quoted the above passage, I will here show what authority the modern compiler of these Memoirs had for inserting it, by giving the words as they stand in the original Memoirs of Sully; they will, moreover, afford another instance how strangely that work has been in many instances garbled and misrepresented: Sully (*i.e.* his secretaries) says, that, after Elizabeth had asked him if, from his silence, he did not comprehend, or approve of her schemes, he replied in the following words: "Madam, my silence does not proceed from disapprobation of what you have told me, but, on the contrary, from my admiration of the excellence of your mind, your exalted courage, your foresight, and your judgment; nor can I deny that I have frequently made

The queen observing my eyes were attentively fixed on her without speaking, imagined she had expressed herself so confusedly in something she had said, that I was unable to comprehend her meaning. But when I ingenuously confessed to her the true cause of my silence and surprise, she then, without scruple, entered into the most minute parts of the design: but as I shall have an ample occasion to treat of this, in relating the great schemes which were prevented by the untimely death of Henry IV., I shall not trouble the reader with useless repetitions, but in this place just show the five principal points to which her majesty reduced so extensive a scheme, as from the sequel of these Memoirs this will appear to have been. The first was, to restore Germany to its ancient liberty, in respect to the election of its emperors, and the nomination of a king of the Romans. The second, to render the United Provinces absolutely independent of Spain; and to form them into a republic, by annexing to them, if necessary, some provinces dismembered from Germany. The third, to do the same in regard to Switzerland, by incorporating with it some of the adjacent provinces, particularly Alsace and Franche-Comté. The fourth, to divide all Christendom into a certain number of powers, as equal as might be. The fifth, to reduce all the various religions in it under

similar propositions to the king my master, and that I have often found him disposed to adopt plans conformable to those your majesty has just mentioned to me." This is all the authority for the passage in the text, which, to say nothing of its improbability, the compiler ought to have seen was in some degree contradicted by what goes before, where the queen, at the beginning of her conversation, asks Sully if the king's affairs were in a better state than in 1598, and if he were in a condition to begin, in good earnest, the great design which she had proposed ever since that period. This certainly implies that Henry knew what that great design was, and that some communications had been made respecting it. — ED.

those three which should appear to be most numerous and considerable in Europe.

Our conference was very long : I cannot bestow praises upon the Queen of England that would be equal to the merit which I discovered in her in this short time, both as to the qualities of the heart and the understanding. I gave an exact relation of everything that passed between us to the king, who very highly approved of all she had said to me. Their majesties corresponded by letter during the rest of the time they stayed at Dover and Calais. All preliminaries were agreed on ; measures were taken even on the grand object of the design, but with such secrecy, that the whole of this affair remained to the death of the king, and even much longer, among the number of those on which only various and uncertain conjectures were formed.<sup>1</sup>

## II

### CONFERENCE BETWEEN SULLY AND JAMES I, AT LONDON, IN 1603<sup>2</sup>

I embraced this opportunity to introduce into our conversation some general hints of a project, by which, with the assistance of his Britannic majesty, the tranquillity of all Europe might be secured. Having said this, I remained silent, as though I had been apprehensive of fatiguing him by too long a discourse : but I knew the curiosity of James would be excited by the little I had said ; accordingly, he

<sup>1</sup> Camden and other writers of this period seem not to have known of the Marquis of Rosny's visit : the former says, when the queen heard that Henry was at Calais, she sent over to him Sir Thomas Edmondes to see him, and congratulate him upon his health ; he again, to acknowledge this courtesy, sent to the queen Marshal Biron, &c. — ED.

<sup>2</sup> From the Fifteenth Book of Sully's Memoirs.



replied that my discourse had not appeared tedious to him, but that it would be proper to know what o'clock it was. He went out, and asked some of his courtiers whom he found at the end of the gallery, and they telling him that it was not yet three, "Well, Sir," said the king to me, returning, "I will break off the party for the chase which I had made for this day, that I may hear you to the end, and this employment will, I am persuaded, be of more service to me than the other."

The reason that induced me to hazard a step of such consequence as that of communicating to King James the great designs upon Spain and all Europe, which had been concerted between Henry and Elizabeth, was, that being persuaded this prince was already of himself inclined to the alliance with France, he only wanted to be determined in this resolution from some great and noble motive; and because, on the other side, his ministers constantly brought him back to their manner of thinking, apparently because he could not support himself against them, from a persuasion that they opposed his sentiments only through ignorance of them. However, this did not prevent my taking the following precaution, which I judged to be very necessary.

I resumed the discourse, and told his majesty that, without doubt, he had sometimes thought, and with good reason, that a man in possession of the places and honours with which I was known to be invested, never quitted his post but on very urgent occasions; that this was my case; that though my commission was only to require a union between France and England, yet, nevertheless, from the opinion I had conceived of his genius and abilities, which fame had not been silent in reporting, I had resolved, before I quitted the kingdom, to discourse with his Britannic

majesty on something infinitely more considerable ; but that what I had to acquaint him with was of such a nature that I could not reveal it to him without exposing myself to ruin, unless he would engage by the most solemn oath to keep it a secret. James, who listened to me with a profound attention, hesitated, however, at taking the oath which I required ; and, to render it unnecessary, he endeavoured himself to discover what I could have so interesting to communicate to him. But finding that my answers to the different questions which he successively asked me gave him not the least intimation of the affair, he satisfied me at last by the most sacred and solemn of all oaths : I mean that of the holy sacrament.

Though I had now nothing to fear from his indiscretion, I however carefully weighed all my words ; and, beginning with an article in which I knew the King of England was most interested — I mean religion, — I told him, that, however I might appear to him engaged in worldly honours and affairs, and how indifferent soever he might perhaps have supposed me to be in matters of religion, yet it was no less certain that I was attached to mine, even so much as to prefer it to my family, fortune, country, and even king ; that I had neglected nothing which might incline the king my master to establish it in France upon solid foundations, being under great apprehensions lest it might one day be overwhelmed by so powerful a faction as that of a union of the pope, the Emperor, Spain, the archdukes, the Catholic princes of Germany, and so many other states and communities interested in its suppression ; that my success hitherto had been tolerable ; but that, perhaps, I was indebted for it only to junctures purely political, which had engaged Henry in a party.

opposed to the house of Austria. That because these circumstances might change, or because I, who was the only person that would use any endeavours to make Henry continue firm in this political plan, might lose my place and his favour, I did not see how the King of France could resist a party which both his religion and the example of others would call upon him to embrace. That this consideration had long inspired me with the thoughts of finding a person for the execution of this design, who, by his rank and power, would be more proper than myself to accomplish it, and fix Henry in his sentiments. That having found all that I had sought for in the prince to whom I had the honour of speaking, it had not been difficult to make my choice. In a word, that it depended only upon himself to immortalise his memory, and become the arbiter of the fate of Europe, by a design to which he would always appear to have put the finishing hand, though he might not be more concerned in the execution than his most Christian majesty.

There remained only to explain to James the nature of this design, of which, at first, I gave nothing further than a general idea, under that of a project for an association of all the princes and states in Europe, whose interest it was to diminish the power of the house of Austria, the foundation of which should be an offensive and defensive alliance between France, England, and Holland, cemented by the closest union of the two royal houses of Bourbon and Stuart. I represented this association in a light which showed it might be very easily formed. There was not the least difficulty in regard to Denmark, Sweden, in a word, to all the Protestant princes and states; and it might be rendered sufficiently advantageous for the Catholic princes

also to induce them to engage in it : for example, the turbulent and ambitious disposition of the Duke of Savoy might be soothed with hopes of obtaining the title of king ; and the princes of Germany, with promises to distribute among them those parts of it which the house of Austria possessed, as Bohemia, Austria, Hungary, Moravia, Silesia, &c., and to reëstablish their ancient privileges : even the pope himself might be gained, by granting him the property of those countries of which he only possessed the feodality. In regard to the King of France, though I endeavoured to persuade James that hitherto he had had no concern in this project, which I pretended was entirely of my own forming, I, however, said, that when I should have communicated it to him, I could safely engage he would have no thoughts either of retaining any conquests which might be made, or being recompensed for them ; though, according to all appearances, the greatest part of the burden would fall upon him, as well by the expenses necessary for carrying on the enterprise, as by his own personal services. I imagined it was most proper to give the affair this turn in regard to Henry, that he might not be under too absolute an obligation.

The King of England immediately started some objections upon the difficulty of uniting so many different princes so differently disposed ; the same nearly which Henry had made when we had last discoursed upon it at Montglat, upon his return from Metz : though, from the slight sketch which I had given him of the design, he, however, appeared highly to approve it, and expressed a desire of being more circumstantially informed of it. In conformity with this desire, the following is the substance of what I said to his Britannic majesty.

Europe is divided into two factions, which are not so justly distinguished by their different religions (because the Catholics and Protestants are confounded together in almost all places) as they are by their political interests ; the first is composed of the Pope, the Emperor, Spain, Spanish Flanders, part of the princes and towns of Germany and Switzerland, Savoy, the Catholic States of Italy, namely, Florence, Ferrara, Mantua, Modena, Parma, Genoa, Lucca, &c. Herein likewise must be comprised the Catholics dispersed in other parts of Europe, at the head of which may be placed the turbulent order of Jesuits, whose views, no doubt, are to subject everything to the Spanish monarchy. The second includes the Kings of France, England, Scotland, Ireland, Denmark, and Sweden ; the Republic of Venice, the United Provinces, and the other part of the princes and towns of Germany and Switzerland : I do not take in Poland, Prussia, Livonia, Muscovy and Transylvania, though these countries are subject to the Christian religion, because the wars in which they are almost continually engaged with the Turks and Tartars, render them in some manner foreign in regard to those of the western part of Europe.

Were the power to be estimated in proportion to the pomp of titles, the extent of territories, and the number of inhabitants, it appears, on the slightest glance, not very favourable to the second of these factions, and the superiority would apparently be determined in favour of the first ; nevertheless, nothing is more erroneous than such an opinion, which may thus be proved : Spain, which must here be named the first of her faction (though in rank and dignity she is only the third), because she is in reality the soul of it — Spain, I say, including her dominions in the

East and West Indies, does indeed possess an extent of territory as large as Turkey and Persia together. But if it be true (and it cannot be doubted) that the New World, in recompense of its gold and other riches, deprives Spain both of her ships and inhabitants, this immense extent of territory, instead of being serviceable, is burthensome.

If we consider the other powers of this party, we shall everywhere find reason to diminish our ordinary ideas. The pope seems firmly attached to Spain ; and, surrounded as he is on all sides by this formidable power, and having no reason to expect succours from any of the other Catholic princes, it is, no doubt, his interest to be so. But as he does, in fact, consider his situation as but little different from real servitude ; and as he is not ignorant that Spain and the Jesuits only make a vain appearance of supporting his authority, it may, doubtless, be concluded, he only wants an opportunity to free himself from the Spanish yoke, and that he would readily embrace a party which should offer to render him their service, without running any great risk ; and Spain has in reality this opinion of him.

In regard to the Emperor, he has nothing in common with Spain except his name, which seems only to increase the jealousies and quarrels which so frequently arise between these two branches of the Austrian power : besides, what is his power ? It consists merely in his title. Hungary, Bohemia, Austria, and other neighbouring countries, are little better than empty names. Exposed as he is, on one side, to the incursions of the formidable armies of the Grand Seignior ; liable, on the other, to see the territories under his dominion tear themselves in pieces, by the multiplicity and diversity of the religions which they contain ; under continual apprehensions, also, lest the electoral princes



should rise and make an attempt to regain their ancient privileges. Indeed, the Emperor, at the present day, all things justly considered, might perhaps be classed among the most inconsiderable of the European Powers : besides, this Austrian branch appears to me so destitute of good subjects, that if it hath not soon a prince, either brave or wise enough to unite the different members of which Germany is composed, it will have everything to fear from the princes of its circles, whose only aim is to procure the restoration of their liberty in religion and election. I do not except even the Elector of Saxony, though he appears the more sincerely attached to the Emperor, as to him of whom he holds his principality, because it is evident his religion must, sooner or later, set him at variance with his benefactor. But supposing the Emperor to receive all the returns of gratitude which he can expect from this Elector, it will amount to nothing, or but very little, so long as he shall be under apprehensions from the branch of John Frederick, whom he has deprived of this electorate.

Thus, from a thorough examination of all particulars, it appears, that almost all the powers on which Spain seems to depend for aid, are either but little attached to her, or capable of doing her but little service. No one is ignorant that the general view of the princes and cities both of Germany and Switzerland is to deliver themselves from the dominion of the Emperor, and even to aggrandise themselves at his expense. Nor has he any greater dependance on the ecclesiastical princes than on the others. A foreign emperor is what they most wish, provided he is not a Protestant. Nothing could give the archdukes, though Spaniards, a greater pleasure than a regulation by which they should become sovereigns in Flanders, independent of

Spain ; weary at length of being only her servants. It is the fear of France alone that binds the Duke of Savoy to the Spaniards ; for he naturally hates them, and has never forgiven the King of Spain for doing so much less for the daughter which he bestowed upon him than for her younger sister. As to Italy, it need only be observed, that it will be obliged to acquiesce in the will of the stronger party.

It is therefore certain, that the second of the factions here described has nothing to fear, provided it understands its own interests well enough to continue in a constant state of union. Now it is also certain, that in this scheme these so natural motives to disunion do not occur ; and that all of them, even that caused by the difference of religion, which in some sort is the only one, ought to give place to the hatred against Spain, which is the great and common motive by which these powers are animated. Where is the prince, in the least jealous of his glory, who would refuse to enter into an association strengthened by four such powerful kings as those of France, England, Sweden, and Denmark, closely united ? It was a saying of Elizabeth, that nothing could resist these four powers, when in strict alliance with each other.

These truths being admitted, it only remains to examine by what methods the house of Austria may be reduced to the monarchy of Spain, and to that monarchy only. These methods consist either in artifice or force, and I have two for each of them. The first of the secret methods is, to divest the house of Austria of the Indies, Spain having no more right to prohibit the rest of the Europeans from an intercourse with those countries, than she has to destroy their natural inhabitants ; and all the nations of Europe

having also a liberty to make establishments in the newly discovered countries as soon as they have passed the line, this enterprise would therefore be easily executed, only by equipping three fleets, each containing eight thousand men, all provided and victualled for six months : England to furnish the ships, Flanders the artillery and ammunition, and France, as the most powerful, the money and soldiers. There would be no occasion for any other agreement than that the conquered countries should be equally divided.

During this, the second of these means should be secretly prepared, upon occasion of the succession to Cleves, and the death of the Emperor, which cannot be far distant, in such manner, that under favour of the opportunities which these two incidents might furnish, reasons might be found to divest the house of Austria of the empire, and her other dependencies in Germany, and therein to restore the ancient freedom of election.

The first of the two open and declared means is, in conjunction to take up arms, and drive the Spaniards entirely out of Flanders, in order to erect this State into a free and independent republic, bearing only the title of a member of the empire ; and this, when the forces of the allies are considered, will not be found difficult. The United Provinces, comprehending in them Liége, Juliers, and Cleves, form a triangle : the first side of which, from Calais to Embden, is entirely towards the sea ; the second is bounded by France, viz., by Picardy, as far as the Somme, and by the country of Messin as far as Mézières ; the third extends from Metz, by Triers, Cologne, and Metz, as far as Dusseldorf. It is only necessary to secure these three sides in such manner that they may be inaccessible to Spain, which may be done without difficulty, England taking upon

herself the first, France the second, the Electors and other interested princes the third. All the towns which should happen to be upon this line, except, perhaps, Thionville, which might require to be forced, would, upon a menace to be put under contribution, immediately submit.

The second of the last two means, is for the league above mentioned generally and in concert to declare war against Spain and the whole house of Austria. What is most essential to observe in regard to this war, is, that France and England should renounce all pretensions to any share of the conquest, and relinquish them to those powers who were not of themselves capable of giving umbrage to the others. Thus Franche-Comté, Alsace, and the Tyrol, naturally fall to the Switzers. The Duke of Savoy ought to have Lombardy, to be erected, with his other dominions, into a kingdom ; the kingdom of Naples falls to the pope, as being most convenient for him ; Sicily to the Venetians, with what may be convenient for them in Istria and Friuli. Thus, it appears, the most solid foundation of this confederacy would arise from all the parties being gainers by it. The rest of Italy, subject to its petty princes, might perhaps be suffered to continue under its present form of government, provided that these little states were altogether considered as composing only one body or republic, of which they should be so many members.

This is a pretty just account of the manner in which I acquainted his Britannic majesty with the design to which I endeavoured to gain his approbation. I further added whatever I thought might tend to obviate his doubts, and confirm him in favour of it. I confessed that I was not myself able to elucidate the design ; that I was not surprised that his majesty had at first perceived great difficulties

in it; that Henry would, no doubt, find many in it also, but that they only proceeded from my own weakness, and the impossibility of showing clearly what, to be perfectly explained, required much time and long discourses; that I was convinced in my own mind the design was not only possible, but that also the success of it was infallible; that if anything was found defective in the scheme as I had conceived it, it might easily be rectified by the genius and abilities of four great kings, and some of the best generals in Europe, to whom the execution of it would be entrusted.

I then returned to the alliance between the two Kings of France and England, and I told his Britannic majesty that this alliance being the chief and necessary foundation of the confederacy which I had proposed to him, it must therefore necessarily begin it, without paying any regard to the discourses of prejudiced persons, or being affected by such frivolous considerations as those of the debts of France and Flanders to England. I assured him that England had nothing to fear from France, for that Henry's great preparations of arms and ammunition, and his amassing such vast sums, were only designed to enable him hereafter of himself to accomplish the greatest part of this important design; at least, that I could flatter myself with success in engaging him in it, from motives of glory and the public service, which operated so powerfully upon the mind of this prince. I touched James in his most sensible part, his ambition to immortalise his memory, and his desire of being brought into comparison with Henry, and of sharing his praises.

My earnestness to succeed gave such force and clearness to my expressions, that this prince, entering into my full meaning, embraced me with a kind of transport

proceeding from his friendship for me, and his indignation at the evil councils which they had hitherto endeavoured to make him follow. "No, Sir," said he, "do not fear that I shall ever fail in what we have together agreed upon." He protested with the same ardour, that he would not, on any consideration, have remained ignorant of what I had told him; that he would never forfeit the good opinion which the King of France and I had conceived of him; that he really was what I thought him; that his reflections upon what I had said would yet further confirm him in the sentiments with which I had inspired him; that he would even now engage to sign the plan of alliance which I had presented to him on Sunday, and wherein he had himself made some inconsiderable alterations; that I should also sign it in the name of the King of France, unless I rather chose to carry it with me unsigned, to show it to his most Christian majesty, in which case he gave me his royal word, that, upon my bringing or sending it back at the end of a month or six weeks, approved and signed by Henry, he would immediately, and without the least difficulty, join to it his own signature. He concluded, by obligingly assuring me, that for the future he would do nothing but in concert with the King of France. He made me promise the same secrecy in regard to all persons, except the king my master, which I had been so free as to require of him; and this he extended so far, as to forbid me ever putting upon paper certain things which upon this occasion he revealed to me, and which I therefore suppress.

Our conference had begun about one o'clock, and continued upwards of four hours. The king called in Admiral Howard, the Earls of Northumberland, Southampton, Mar, Lord Mountjoy, and Cecil, and declared to them, that,



having deliberately considered my reasons, he was resolved to enter into a close alliance with France against Spain. He reproached Cecil in very strong terms for having, both in his words and actions, acted contrary to his commands ; which declaration the secretary received very awkwardly. " Cecil," said James to him, " I command you without any reply or objection, in conformity to this my design, to prepare the necessary writings, according to which, *I will then give the dexter*,<sup>1</sup> and all assurances to the ambassadors of the States." This was the first time he had distinguished them by this title. Then turning to me, and taking me by the hand, he said, " Well, Mr. Ambassador, are you now perfectly satisfied with me ? " I replied by a profound reverence, and by making his majesty the same protestations of fidelity and attachment as if it had been to my own king ; and I desired he would let me confirm it to him by kissing his hand. He embraced me, and demanded my friendship with an air of goodness and confidence which very much displeased several of his councillors who were present. Upon my departure, he gave orders to the Earl of Northumberland to accompany me to the Thames, and to Sydney to escort me to London.

<sup>1</sup> This expression signifies an oath, or promise of alliance, made by presenting the right hand.

## THE UNITED STATES OF EUROPE

BY EDWARD EVERETT HALE<sup>1</sup>

IN the midst of war, this phrase begins to assume its importance as the promise of peace. It embodies the policy which the Republican leaders of Europe propose. More than this, although most of the Republics of Europe are yet to be born, still the phrase "The United States of Europe" begins to be spoken among princes and in their cabinets. For three hundred years, at the very least, every war in Europe, and every treaty, has prepared the way for such a union. For the last five and fifty years, the advance has been more rapid and sure.

It is very true, that, as the proposal for such a union has been discussed in the literature of Europe, as in the essays of St. Pierre, Rousseau, Emmanuel Kant, Bentham, or de Maistre, the burden of proof has been always against it. Men speak of it now, whenever it turns up, as if it were a part of the dreamer's store of visions, belonging with Ovid's Golden Age, or with the fabled knights of the Round Table; and, as the world goes, to say that we shall have The United States of Europe only when all princes are as pure as King Arthur, all ladies as lovely as the peerless Oriana, all knights as brave as Amadis, is to put it off indefinitely to the perfect world. But it happens, very fortunately, that over a part of another continent, which

<sup>1</sup> This paper upon "The Great Design," by Dr. Hale, first appeared in his magazine, *Old and New*, March, 1871.

is, for practical purposes, larger than Europe, this system, which it is so easy to call a dream, is already extended. It happens that the transitory vision has lasted as a sober reality in America for eighty years. It happens, that, in that eighty years, it has twice met the shock of foreign war, and come out only the stronger for the conflict; nay, in the course of that eighty years, The United States of America has been threatened once by terrible internal convulsion. The question was then brought to the test of arms, whether, as Mr. Lincoln says, "A system light and easy enough for the freedom of the people, must of necessity be too weak for its own preservation." And, in that terrible test, The United States of *America* stood the rack and the convulsion. After that terrible test, The United States of *America* was stronger than ever; and it seemed more certain that it would abide for another century the greatest Peace Society that the sun ever looked down upon.

The real question, then, for Europe at this hour is, whether there is any fatality in that continent which prevents such a union among her sixteen States, as has proved possible, though not easy, among seven and thirty States in America. History has changed the Saxon Heptarchy of seven kingdoms into one England. History has united that England with Wales. History has knit England, Scotland, and Ireland into The United Empire of Great Britain. History has knit all the Russias into the Empire of Russia. History has united Normandy, Brittany, France, Navarre, Lorraine, and Alsace into the Empire of France. History has united Arragon, Leon, and Castile into the Kingdom of Spain. History has woven a dozen States of yesterday into the Kingdom of Italy of to-day. Even in the last summer and autumn, history has transformed the

confederation of Northern Germany into a union close and sure. The question for Europe is, whether this is all? Must the process stop here? Is there any reason why America should be the only continent for permanent peace? Is Europe to be given over to permanent war? Or may Europe, in the future, learn its great lesson from this side of the water, and The United States of America point the fundamental system for The United States of Europe?

The public writers of Europe, when they look across the ocean, are wholly deceived even by our great success. They write and speak as if mutual peace were of course here, as if we had been always one nation. They forget that the Spaniard in Florida and the Englishman in Georgia hated each other and fought each other as cordially as ever Queen Elizabeth hated King Philip of Spain, till the United States of America compelled Georgia and Florida to be as one. Such writers forget that between Louisiana and Kentucky there was as little natural love as between the France whose children were in Louisiana, and the England whose children were in Kentucky. They do not choose to remember that the Catholic who planted Maryland, and the Puritan who planted Massachusetts, had just the same causes for mutual hatred as had the Catholic and Roundhead in Ireland, who fought there in the days of Cromwell.

The truth is, that, at the period when the Constitution of the United States was formed, there was not one of the old thirteen States but had serious questions of controversy with its neighbors. Massachusetts had by charter a right to a strip of country as wide as Massachusetts, running to the Pacific Ocean. The State of Connecticut had rights similar, though not so large. Each of those States

had a controversy with each other, both of them with New York, and all of them with Virginia. These are only illustrations of open questions, just like the questions which once and again deluge Europe with blood. What settled these questions? Nothing in the nature of things. They were settled simply and only by the establishment of the nation — one out of many — which we call "The United States of America."

And, unless all coming history is to be the record of blood, a lesson is in that history which is to be learned and wrought out in practice in the establishment of The United States of Europe. The experiment has been tried here under some signal advantages; but, meanwhile, the preparations for a like experiment have been going forward there. It is nearly three centuries since the diplomacy of Europe began to meditate upon the plan. The accomplishment of that plan is easier than ever now that these three centuries have worked towards its fulfilment.

It seems worth while, just now, to examine the history of that diplomacy; because it seems possible that this country, with an example so admirable, of peace secured in face of every difficulty, may at this moment speak the word of the great pacification: "Let us have peace." The most sublime expression that has yet fallen from the lips of the taciturn president is the great word which United America has a right to speak to disunited Europe. I do not know whether, at this moment, there are any statesmen in the world. If there are, is not this very moment of war, of defeat of the proud, and victory of the prudent, the very moment to bring forward again the hope which two centuries and a half ago seemed so near accomplishment? Has not the time come for a power so strong as

ours to speak in the interests of permanent peace in Christendom? Has not the time come for us all to be ready to say the right word, and to do the right thing, when the great man of to-day, whoever he may prove to be, speaks the great word, which the greatest king of France spoke before this country was born? Has there ever been a moment when all true men could act together, as in this sea of troubles they might act to establish The United States of Europe? And if the great man of Europe, whoever he may be, speaks that great word, and lays the plans for that great harmony, may not this land of ours, which has given the great example, do more than any land to make real the sublime idea? Our statesmanship, our policy, our international science, — they have no object at this moment so noble, nay, they have none so real, as the advance, by one of the great strides of history, of a permanent peace among the States of Christendom.

With this conviction, I ask the reader's attention to the first appearance in diplomacy of this "Great Design."

HENRY OF NAVARRE, the first sovereign of his time as he was its first soldier, had been born almost in poverty, and had been trained in misfortune. It would be fair to say almost that he had been nursed on the battle-field. Protestants have looked askance on him, because he permitted himself to be received in form into the Roman Church; but probably the severest critic will admit that Henry, in this apostacy, if it were such, acted with the noblest motive, in the hope, which was well founded, of securing France from civil war. This is certain, that he earned the eager love of his Protestant followers, and the complete respect of his Catholic subjects. Through the



poverty, persecution, bloodshed, and struggle of youth, he wrought his way at last to the united throne of France and Navarre, and founded that dynasty which came to its end in 1830.

His friend and minister, de Rosny, afterwards Duke of Sully, has left us in his memoirs better material for the real life of this great sovereign than we often have for such history. Once and again in those memoirs is allusion made to the king's "ten wishes." Some of them were such as any man may share. Some were peculiar to kings.

The first wish of the king is for divine grace, and the safety of his soul.

The second is, that his Protestant subjects may live in peace.

The third, that France may hold her own against all enemies; and

The *fourth*, alas! that he may be rid of his wife forever.

One of the ten wishes is, that he may win a battle in person over the King of Spain in person. And so they vary, now personal and now political, till nine of the ten are named. These nine, it seems, were well known at court, — matters, perhaps, of conversation and amusement there. The king had ten wishes, and the courtiers knew nine of them. The tenth was more secret; he only spoke of it with statesmen and his wisest counsellors. The tenth wish was always spoken of as "The Great Design;" and it would seem that unless one were well trained in the secrets of diplomacy in those days one knew nothing more of it.

This tenth wish of the soldier-king, this great design, which was to crown all his laurels with a new wreath of glory, was his design for THE UNITED STATES OF EUROPE.

It is convenient now to speak of such a project as a dream ; but, as we have seen, it is a dream which has proved a living reality here in America. And when in America even ten States rebelled, which had been permitted to nurse one institution false to every principle of a Republic, when they tried the strength of the dream, they found that the Christian commonwealth was what it was said to be eighteen centuries ago ; they found it was strong with the strength of a divine builder ; they found it was reared upon the Rock of Ages. " Whosoever shall fall on that stone shall be broken ; on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder." They tried the experiment ; and now they know the meaning of the prophecy. It is convenient for people who distrust God's power and Christ's kingdom to look on such a project as a dream ; but that is not the way it was considered when it was last brought forward, when the condition of Europe seemed ripe for it, and it needed only, one would say, two or three great men to carry it through. Are there possibly two or three such men at the helm of affairs in America or in Europe now ?

It was a little before the first planting of Virginia, nearly twenty years before the landing at Plymouth, that Henry, acting in concert with Queen Elizabeth in her old age, conceived this plan of what he called the Christian commonwealth, to be formed among the powers of Europe. No man called this a dream then, when such a soldier as Henry agreed to it, and such statesmen as Sully and Cecil planned for it. The death of Elizabeth, and the elevation of a fool to the throne of England, was its first misfortune. But Henry IV. was not born to be crossed by fools ; and to the moment of his murder, in 1610, he persevered.

The diplomacy of France and of Northern Europe for more than ten years seconded his endeavors. His plan in brief was this, to reduce the number of European States, much as the Congress of Vienna eventually did two hundred years afterwards, or so that all Europe should be divided among fifteen powers. Russia did not then count as part of Europe; and Prussia was not then born. Of these powers, six were the kingdoms of England, France, Spain, Denmark, Sweden, and Lombardy. Five were to be elective monarchies, viz., The German Empire, The Papacy, Poland, Hungary, and Bohemia; and there were to be four Republics, — Switzerland, Venice, The States of Holland and Belgium, and The Republic of Italy, made up somewhat as the kingdom of Italy is now. These fifteen powers were to maintain but one standing army. The chief business of this army was to keep the peace among the States, and to prevent any sovereign from interfering with any other, from enlarging his borders, or other usurpations. This army and the navy were also to be ready to repel invasions of Mussulmans and other barbarians. For the arrangement of commerce, and other mutual interests, a Senate was to be appointed of four members from each of the larger, and two from each of the smaller States, who should serve three years, and be in constant session. It was supposed, that, for affairs local in their character, a part of these senators might meet separately from the others. On occasions of universal importance, they would meet together. Smaller Congresses, for more trivial circumstances, were also provided for.

The plan contemplated a grand army of Europe, of 320,000 men, and a navy of 120 vessels, to be provided in quotas agreed upon by the respective members of the

association; and, from the beginning, the members of the association announced that no secession was to be possible or to be permitted.

With generosity such as few princes have shown, Henry proposed that the executive which should carry out the decisions of the senate should be the elected emperor of Germany, for the time. This was probably the weakest part of the plan, the point to be secured, being, of course, then or now, the most difficult. But, as the Emperor was chosen in an assembly in which so many of the several powers had a voice, this seemed the simplest adjustment.

What gave the practical character, in its very outset, to a scheme so bold, was the absolute disclaimer, both on Henry's part and Elizabeth's, of any desire to increase their own territories or power. Henry satisfied even the jealousy of the pope in this regard; and so loyal was he in his diplomacy, always looking forward with this "Great Design," that, according to Sully, at the moment of Henry's murder, he had secured the practical active co-operation of twelve of the fifteen powers, who were to unite in this confederation. They had avouched this co-operation by raising their contingents for the army, by which they proposed to crush the pretensions of the house of Austria and the king of Spain. The co-operation of Switzerland also would be secured at any moment it was wanted: so that really Austria and Spain had at that moment all Europe in arms against them; and the leader of all Europe was this chivalrous Henry, in whom the pope had confidence, and with whom the Protestants were all allied, — Protestant at heart, Catholic in ritual, a man possessed with this great design, still in the very prime of life, in command of an admirable army, with a treasury full, a people prosperous, himself the first real soldier of his time.

No man said that "the Great Design" was a dream then!

It is easy to see that the central wish which bound these powers together was the wish to humble Austria. Under Charles the Fifth, Austria and Spain, with all the new wealth of the Indies at their command, had domineered over all Europe. Philip the Second would have been glad to do the same thing. The great design of Henry offered, therefore, to the various powers this immediate prize, that they would humble the emperor of Austria, and tie his hands. This was just as the great alliance of the nations of Europe against the first Napoleon was animated by a determination to humble him, and the power of France. But, beyond this immediate purpose, Henry and Elizabeth and the king of Sweden looked to such a control by the allied powers that no single sovereign should so claim the lion's share again. The Great Design looked beyond the immediate purpose to the permanent peace of Europe.

The very jealousy with which Austria was regarded was the strong support of Henry's diplomacy. He was enough of a Catholic to obtain even the pope's secret support in his negotiations. The scheme, therefore, had the advantage which such a scheme could hardly have had from that time to this, that it was not a mere sectarian alliance of Protestant against Papist. It proposed a combination of Catholic Italy and Catholic France with Protestant England and Protestant Sweden and Germany. This was its element of strength.

Its weakness was, that, before it could even be set in motion, the separate States of Europe had to be re-organized within. Thus the Republic of Belgium was to be created; the Kingdom of Lombardy was to be created;

the Republic of Italy was to be created ; and so on : and every petty prince, who, in this process, had been turned out of the crumbling owl-hole which he called a palace, would be grunting and scolding, and doing his little best to stop the progress of the Great Design. Nay, every scullion that washed the dishes in the courts of such a potentate, and every beggar-boy that screamed at his horse's tail, would consider that their perquisites and honors were stolen from them. The Great Design was encumbered from the beginning with such difficulty of detail.

But it was not left, alas ! to any fair test of its allies or of its enemies. Just as Henry was maturing his last preparations for that great campaign, in which, at the head of united Europe, he would offer Austria peace and the Great Design, or war against all the world beside, another issue came. Henry entered his lumbering carriage of state, to make Sully a last visit at the arsenal. They turned from the Louvre into one of the narrow streets of Paris, when some obstacle stopped the progress. At the moment, a very tall man, in a cloak, muffled heavily, and with a broad-brimmed hat over his eyes, stepped upon the wheel of the coach, dashed his arm into the window, and struck the king with a knife ; to make certain, he drew back the knife, and struck again at the heart, — the most loving and gallant heart in all Christendom : and the king fell dead. With that blow, the Great Design died. It was to have made real, perhaps for centuries, the dying prayer of the Saviour of the world, that " they all may be one ; " and, at the blow of a crazed fanatic, this hope vanished for well nigh three centuries.

How like another stroke by another fanatic, which stopped the beating of the most loving heart in America,



at the moment when that heart was seeking the pacification of our warring States, full of kind wishes and kind hopes for all !

That scrap from the history of courts is a proper illustration of the duties, the hopes, and the prayers of the citizens of this Republic. It is one of the few illustrations in history where the kings of the world have distinctly chosen peace, permanent peace, as the great object of policy. Such is not the habit of kings. No : but it should be the habit of peoples ; it should be the habit of republics. The diplomacy of a Republic, because it is a Republic should look to the strengthening and maintaining peace among the nations of mankind.

We are constantly misled in this matter, because we go to school, and study the histories of mere families, — of Bourbons, of Tudors, of Hapsburgs, — and their wars. We get excited over these wars. Unconsciously, we come to think that there is no great nation but a nation which is great in war. We might as rightly wish to have our nation great in earthquakes, or great in pestilences, or great in conflagrations. To do our duty in war when it comes, that is one thing ; to enjoy war, or to seek it, that is another. The great soldiers have always been great pacificators. The great Napoleon is no exception. But we are deceived by the books. Because an old feudal nation followed war, and has war written all over its history, we take a notion that we, though we are not a feudal nation, must repeat that history. On the other hand, the whole being and nature of our nation is different. This Republic exists simply that so many men and women may have happy homes. That is what it is for. It is not for the

extension of any boundary, it is not for the propagation of any theory, it is not for the glory of any leader, that our States are founded, or our Union set in order. No : it is that forty million men and women may live in happy homes. George Frisbie Hoar said the other day, that the business of the people of this country is to see that " no more history is written." He alluded to Montesquieu's maxim, that that people is happy whose history is not written. Well, that is our duty. To keep outside of the sensation life, — the poor life of the scene-shifter in the melo-drama, which makes up the common record of the vulgar histories. It is our duty to cultivate and to illustrate those relations of peace in which, and in which only, come in the true prosperity of nations.

As it happens, this great necessity of keeping the peace at home has cost us one great civil war. Very fortunately for us, that great duty of ruling out of our own affairs, once for all, the one relic of feudalism we found here, has shown to the world that there is no such military strength, where strength is needed, as the strength in arms of a free people. That has been happily proved for a century. That being known, our policy is, and our duty is, to watch this blessed moment which, after three centuries, may be sweeping round even now upon the dial, for securing the permanent peace of Christendom. It sometimes seems as if, in statesmanship, we were living on the reputation of the fathers ; but, whenever we shall have a statesman at the front worthy of that name, he will actively, and with steady system, carry forward plans which look to a pacification of Europe, as sure and as well-founded as the pacification which the fathers wrought out for America. The plans of Henry are already half carried through. The jarring

duchies and electorates and principalities of Europe are already reduced to a lesser number than he proposed; and in the present position of the pope, in the union of Italy, in the very weakness of France, in the asserted strength of Germany, in the anxiety of Austria, in the change of dynasty of Spain, in the new institutions of Russia, and in the overthrow of landed rights of England, the moment has come which some great man will certainly choose for trying to work out the other half of Henry's problem, — for establishing The United States of Europe.

If we have any statesmen, and if we have any diplomacy, the men will guide the policy toward the solution of this problem.

Does any man say that we have a quarrel of our own with England to be adjusted first? This is not so, as we have said before. There was an England with which we had a quarrel; but not with this England, not with the England of to-day. There was an England once, the England of the Tudors and Stuarts, the England of George the Third, of Bute and North and Grenville, with which our fathers had a quarrel. That England still survived in its dotage nine years ago; and some dregs of that quarrel were ours then. But five years past have wrought a revolution. That old England has been swept away as thoroughly as old Virginia is swept away, and ought to be forgotten as Jefferson Davis is forgotten. The government of England has been taken from the land-holders of England, and given to the people of England. The feudal aristocracy has been bidden to take its place. The workingmen of England have stepped to the front to take theirs. They are willing to pay us what they owe us. Let them pay us. They are willing to give us security for the future.

Let them give it ; and then, while they wage their war in England with what are left of the old Warwicks and Stuarts, barons and cavaliers, and all such standard-bearers of the past, let our statesmen see to it that we are the friends of the free institutions of the new-born England. We must not trip the feet and hold the hands of our own allies, — of such men as John Bright and Thomas Hughes and the working-men of Lancashire, — who never once failed in their loyalty to truth and freedom.

This Republic is founded for the happiness of home. When once that truth can be understood, both by noisy politicians and by quiet statesmen, the great victory of truth will be nearly won. Not for the record of slaughter, but for the happiness of unmolested homes ; for this the true statesman resolves, as the true Christian prays. And this nation works out its destiny, and its public officers achieve their own true honor, as its word is spoken in the great plea for the Christian commonwealth. At the present moment, the next step in the advance towards it is the up-building of The United States of Europe.

The United States of Europe and the United States of America would not quarrel ; and they would hold the power of the world in their hands. The international policy of the world would be developed as in the vision

“Where the war-drums throbbed no longer, and  
the battle-flags were furled

In the parliament of man, the federation of the  
world:

There the common sense of most shall hold a  
fretful realm in awe;

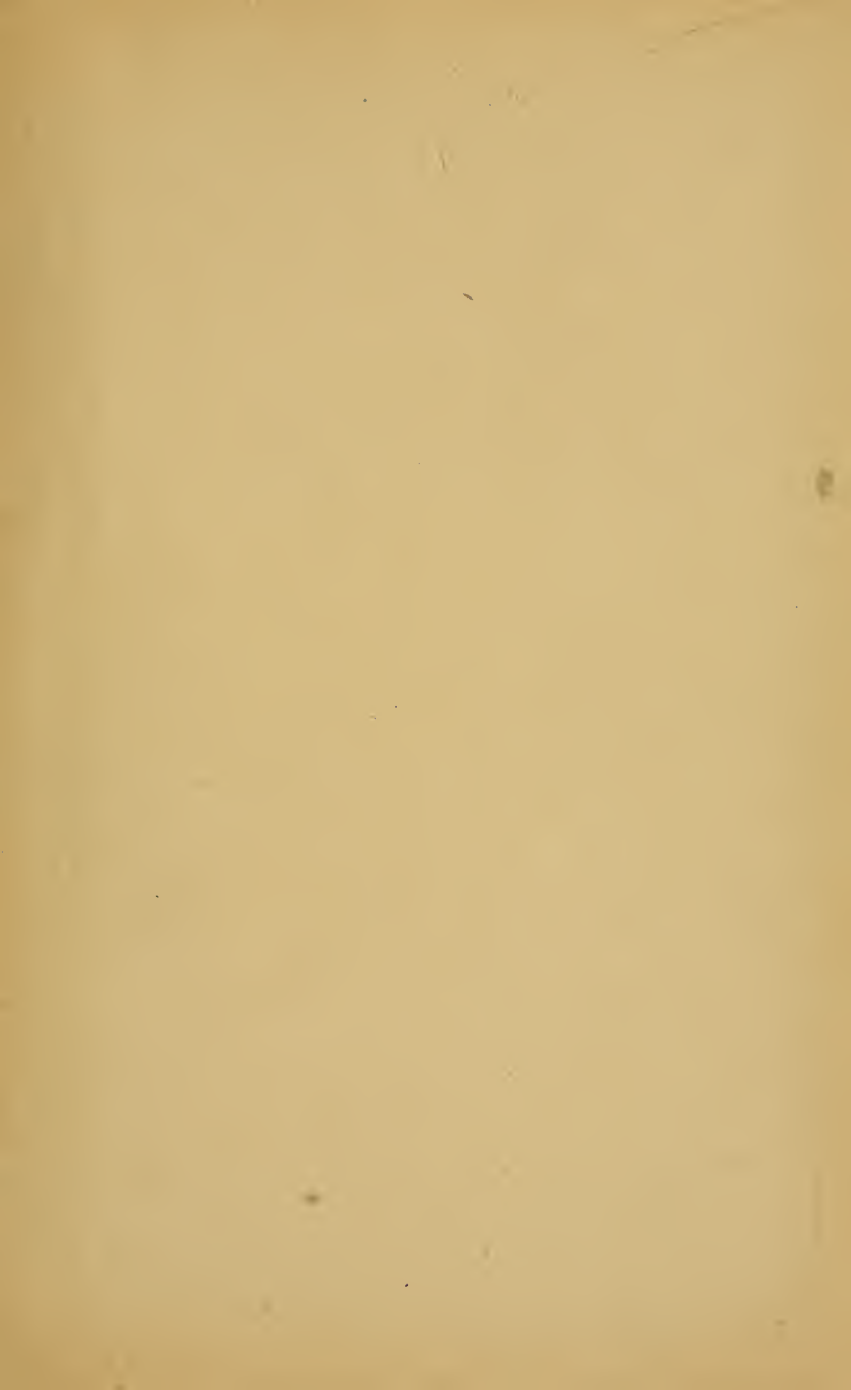
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapped in  
universal law.



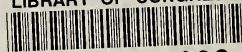








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